CHRISTIAN PHILOSOPHY:

OR,

AN ATTEMPT TO DISPLAY,

BY INTERNAL TESTIMONY,

THE

EVIDENCE AND EXCELLENCE

OF

REVEALED RELIGION.

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Hoc PHILOSOPHIÆ *genus in affectibus ſitum eſt, veriùs quam in ſyllogiſmis; vita eſt magìs, quàm diſputatio;* AFFLATUS *potiùs quàm eruditio; transformatio magìs, quam ratio.* ERASMUS.

Tantùm eſto docilis et multùm in hâc PHILOSOPHIA *promoviſti. Ipſa ſuppeditat* DOCTOREM SPIRITUM, *qui nulli ſeſe lubentiùs impertit, quàm ſimplicibus animis. At rursùm ita non deeſt infimis ut ſummis etiam ſit admirabilis. Quid autem aliud eſt* CHRISTI PHILOSOPHIA, *quam ipſe* RENASCENTIAM *vocat, quam inſtauratio benè conditæ naturæ.* ERASMUS.

ΠΝΕΥΜΑ ΖΩΟΠΟΙΟΥΝ. 1 COR. XV. 45.

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PREFACE

TO THE

FIRST EDITION.

As every attempt to illuſtrate and recommend ſuch opinions on RELIGION, as oppoſe pride and prejudice, is peculiarly obnoxious to the miſconceptions of the ignorant, the miſrepreſentation of the malevolent, and the raſh cenſure of the thoughtleſs; (who rudely and haſtily condemn what they ſcarcely allow themſelves even time to underſtand;) I think it proper to entreat all who honour this book with any degree of their attention, duly to conſider the AUTHORITIES, human as well as ſcriptural, on which it is founded; and not to reject doctrines in which their own happineſs is moſt deeply concerned, till they ſhall have invalidated thoſe *authorities*, and proved themſelves ſuperior in ſagacity, learning, and piety, to the great men whoſe ſentiments I have cited in ſup-

port of my own. Let the firm phalanx of ſurrounding authorities be firſt fairly routed, before the opponents level their arrows, even bitter words, at a book which enforces a doctrine, unfaſhionable indeed, but certainly the doctrine of the Goſpel.

There is no doubt but that my ſubject is the moſt momentous which can fall under the contemplation of a human being; and I therefore claim for it, as the happineſs of mankind is at ſtake, a diſpaſſionate and unprejudiced attention.

The moral world, as well as the political, appears, at preſent, to be greatly out of order. Moral and political confuſion, indeed, naturally produce each other. Let all who love their ſpecies, or their country, calmly conſider whether the neglect or rejection of Chriſtianity may not be the real cauſe of both: and let thoſe who are thus perſuaded, co-operate with every attempt to revive and diffuſe the TRUE SPIRIT OF THE GOSPEL. "Let us meekly inſtruct "thoſe that OPPOSE THEMSELVES*," (if GOD, peradventure, will *give them* repentance

pentance to the acknowledging of the TRUTH,) "not being overcome of evil, "but overcoming evil with good†."

Nor let a private clergyman, however inconſiderable, be thought to ſtep out of his province, in thus endeavouring to tranquillize the tumult of the world, by calling the attention of erring and wretched mortals to the goſpel of peace. He is juſtified, not only by the general principles of humanity, but by the particular command of the religion of which he is a miniſter. Thus ſaith the Apoſtle, in a charge which may be conſidered as generally addreſſed to all preachers of the Goſpel:

"Feed the flock of God, as much as "lieth in you, *taking* the *overſight* thereof, "not by *conſtraint*, but *willingneſs*; not "for FILTHY LUCRE, but of a ready "mind‡. Take heed to ALL the flock, "over the which the HOLY GHOST hath "made you *overſeers*, to feed the CHURCH "of GOD, which he hath purchaſed with-"his own blood §."

* 2 Tim. ii. 25. † Romans, xii. 21.
‡ 1 Pet. v. 2. § Acts, xx. 28.

This I have humbly attempted; and, in imitation of a moſt excellent prelate *, I have adapted my book to ALL; yet various parts of it more particularly to *various deſcriptions* of men; ſome to the great, ſome to the learned, but the greater part to the PEOPLE: remembering the Apoſtle's example, who ſays, "To the weak became "I as weak, that I might gain the weak: "I am made all things to all men, that "I might by all means ſave ſome; and "this I do for the GOSPEL'S SAKE, that I "might be a partaker thereof with "you †."

And now, readers, before you proceed any farther, let me be permitted to ſay to you, "The grace of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, "and the love of God, and the fellowſhip "of the Holy Ghoſt, be with you," in your progreſs through this book, and alſo through life, even to its cloſe.

* Biſhop Sanderſon, who preached in an *appropriate* manner, *ad aulam, ad clerum, ad populum*. See the titles of his Sermons.

† 1 Cor. xi. 22.

PREFACE

TO

THIS EDITION.

"THE modern method," ſays an ingenious divine, "of perpetually "diſcuſſing the evidence of the Chriſtian "Religion in the way of curioſity and "literary debate, has a tendency to keep "the mind in a very immoral ſuſpenſe; "and to divert it from habituating itſelf to "the temper and precepts of the religion, "thus made the ſubject of endleſs diſ-"quiſition. The NEW TESTAMENT IN-"CLUDES ITS OWN EVIDENCE *."

This

* ——La larga ploia
De lo Spirito Santo,
E' ſyllogiſmo, che la m'ha conchiuſa
Acutamente ſi, ch'enverſa d'ella
Ogni demonſtration mi par obtuſa.
DANTE'S PARADISE.

"*The abundant ſhower of divine grace, which is* "*diffuſed over the Scriptures, becomes an argument ſo*

 "*cogent*

This opinion alone would juſtify the deſign of the ſubſequent volume, which is to perſuade men to habituate themſelves to the "*temper and precepts of the Chriſtian* "*Religion*," inſtead of ſpending their lives in oſtentatious diſquiſitions on its external evidence.

In oppoſing the new-faſhioned doctrines of thoſe who call themſelves, by way of eminence, the RATIONAL CHRISTIANS, or the PHILOSOPHERS, I foreſaw that I rendered myſelf obnoxious both to miſapprehenſion and miſrepreſentation. I was not unprepared to bear conſequences which I predicted. They excite no ſurpriſe; and even the pain which they might otherwiſe inflict, is prevented by a conſciouſneſs of having, with ſingleneſs of heart, eſpouſed a cauſe beneficial to mankind, and founded on ſcriptural, as well as the higheſt *human*, authority.

"*cogent and concluſive to my mind, that, in compariſon* "*with it, all demonſtration appears inefficacious.*"

DANTE, quoted by F. SIMON.

Nevertheleſs

Nevertheleſs I think it right, not to neglect an opportunity of farther explaining the ſcope of theſe pages; becauſe ſuch an explanation may render them more efficacious in accompliſhing their good purpoſe.

My book, as, I think, muſt have been evident to every attentive and unprejudiced obſerver, was, in the firſt inſtance, deſigned to COUNTERACT among the multitude, the effect of Mr. Paine's Age of Reaſon, Volney's Ruins, and the general example of French apoſtaſy.

But what mode of counteraction did I adopt? that of producing * hiſtorical evidence

* Dr. Cudworth was a philoſopher of the very firſt order, deeply learned, and ſingularly ſagacious. Yet, what ſays he on the ſubject of producing faith by hiſtorical evidence? the following words are from the Preface to his *Intellectual Syſtem:*

" Scripture Faith is not a mere believing of hiſ-
" torical things upon *teſtimonies only;* but a certain
" higher and diviner power in the ſoul, that pecu-
" liarly correſpondeth with the Deity."

" Faith," ſays the celebrated Dr. Heylin, is
" an impreſſion of the Almighty on the heart of
" man. This experimental efficacious knowledge of
" God, manifeſting himſelf to his worſhippers, and

dence or abſtruſe argument? no; I had ſeen them both repeatedly uſed, with little or no effect on the maſs of the people, among whom the effect was, on all accounts, chiefly to be deſired; becauſe they are moſt expoſed to the miſery reſulting from the want of a guide, and the deluſions of a fallacious one. The grand attack on Chriſtianity having been made in a popular mode, a popular mode of repelling it appeared to me likely to be moſt effectual. To learn this popular mode, ſhould I repair to the dreary ſchools of metaphyſics?

" thereby diſpoſing and inclining them to their " duty; this knowledge, I ſay, is what we call " Faith, and is the proper baſis of all religion."

Monſieur Paſchal ſays, " it is the heart, and not " the reaſon, which has properly the perception of " God. GOD SENSIBLE TO THE HEART, is the " moſt compendious deſcription of true and perfect " Faith."

As to reaſoning, men may reaſon in defence of what they do not believe, and may reaſon ſo as not eaſily to be refuted, yet without producing belief in their readers or hearers. Rouſſeau ſays, " Boyle's " Lectures might have been written by a ſociety of " unbelievers."

ſhould I unfold the rolls of hiſtory ſo often preſented in vain to the eye of the unbeliever? Should I not rather go to the churches of the great city, where thronging multitudes crowd for admiſſion, and ſtand on tiptoe to liſten to the preacher as to a living oracle? there, amid much impropriety of accent, vulgarity of language, and extraneous matter, (a ſpecies of oratory little to be approved, by a mind verſed in the ſtudy of claſſical models,) I diſcovered the charm, which won the hearts, and through them convinced the underſtandings of the multitude. The charm was no other than a diſplay of the ſpirit's evidence, and the doctrine of grace. I wanted an effectual *principle* to proceed upon, and I ſought it not only on the ſhelves of deſerted libraries, but alſo in the living world, under the guidance of experience. I ſought and found a principle, which might, I thought, make its way, like the books of Paine, and the example of France; not among the learned few only, but alſo among the mixed multitude that conſtitute the people, or, if

you pleaſe, the populace. The poiſon was epidemically diffuſed, and required an epidemical antidote. Something was wanted to touch and meliorate the HEART of the people. The underſtanding uſually obeys the impulſe of the heart. When the main ſpring is in its proper place and ſtate, the whole machine performs its office with few and ſhort deviations from rectitude.

Addreſſes to the heart, founded on the doctrine of divine influence, I had obſerved, in the crowded congregations of the metropolis, to be productive of pure morals, warm devotion, diffuſive charity, and the ſtrongeſt attachment to the Chriſtian Religion. I had ſeen, if the human eye can preſume to judge, the moſt unſhaken faith among the poor, to whom the Goſpel was preached by men, poor themſelves, and ſcarcely better furniſhed with human learning, than the fiſhermen of Galilee. The holy ſpirit's energy was their favourite doctrine, a doctrine no leſs ſublime and conſolatory, than ſound and true. The good which I found in their matter I adopted,

adopted, while I endeavoured to avoid the apparent evil of their manner. It is their manner which gives offence; and prevents among the higher ranks, whoſe welfare is as dear to the benevolent preacher as that of the loweſt, the diffuſion of the moſt ſalutary doctrine of the Goſpel. I reprobated all irregularity in their proceedings, wiſhing all things to be done in order. I exploded all ranting in the pulpit, all theatrical tricks, all hypocritical extravagance, all ignorant effrontery; but, ſeparating the wheat from the chaff, I retained the ſound doctrine of the ſpirit's energy, founded as it is in ſcripture, enforced in the plaineſt terms by the church, and recommended by the eloquence and arguments of the moſt regular, moſt learned and exalted divines of this and all other countries of Chriſtendom *.

I have intimated in the following pages, that I purpoſely choſe this topic, for reviving Chriſtian faith and practice, and dwelt

* From Eraſmus to Secker, Townſon, Horſley, and many more, beſides thoſe cited in this volume.

upon

upon it the rather, becauſe I had obſerved, that it had been neglected by recent and reſpectable divines, and even exploded with marks of contumely. Since the prevalence of methodiſm, it had been branded with the epithets, myſtic, fanatic, enthuſiaſtic.

It would be tedious to introduce the numberleſs paſſages from late authors, who have joined in diſcountenancing the doctrine of the ſpirit's agency, in accompliſhing what the Goſpels call REGENERATION. It ſhall ſuffice to quote one paſſage from a living writer, a divine ſtill more reſpectable for his talents and virtues, than his exalted rank in the Church of England, though, as a man, liable to error. The following are the words of Archdeacon Paley:

"If any one aſks—what the expreſſions "in ſcripture, REGENERATE—BORN OF "THE SPIRIT—NEW CREATURES, mean? "—WE anſwer, that "THEY MEAN NO-"THING! NOTHING TO US!—NOTHING "TO BE FOUND, OR SOUGHT FOR, IN "THE

" THE PRESENT CIRCUMSTANCES OF " CHRISTIANITY*!"

Such words uttered in the moſt peremptory manner, by high authority; the authority of genius, learning, and eminent ſtation in the church, are counterbalanced, as they ought, by authority of, at leaſt, equal weight, in paſſages quoted in the following pages. Add to this, the deciſion of the church, diſplayed in her articles and liturgy, and the weight of authority will preponderate in favour of the ſpirit's agency, in producing the change called regeneration. In producing this change, it unavoidably produces the higheſt evidence in the mind of the believer, and leaves him fully convinced of the truth, as well as excellence of Chriſtianity. *Faith is the gift of God*—" and he to whom God " has given faith, wants no proofs; " while he who is deſtitute of faith will

* See Paley's Sermon preached at the viſitation of Edmund Lord Biſhop of Carliſle, July 15, 1777; printed for Faulder.

" not

" not be convinced by any demonſtra-
" tion *."

The ſanctifying power of the ſpirit, on the heart and life, is the higheſt of all evidence to the truth of the Chriſtian Religion; and it is not neceſſary to a ſaving faith, that a plain man ſhould know any thing of *demonſtrations*.

But let not the ſuperior value and importance of the internal evidence entirely ſuperſede the external, or render it ſuſpected of wanting a firm foundation.

* Cui fidem largitus eſt Deus, probationes non requirit; qui fide caret, nulla illi ſufficiet demonſtratio.

Huetii Præfat. ad Demonſt. Evang. page 7.

Huet wrote his " *Demonſtration*" to bring the reaſoners to *liſten*;—but acknowledges that grace muſt produce true ſaving faith. He ſays, " Probari " poteſt Religionis Chriſtianæ veritas eo genere de-
" monſtrationis, quod non minus certum eſt quam
" demonſtrationes ipſæ geometricæ. *The truth of*
" *the Chriſtian Religion may be proved by a kind of*
" *demonſtration, not leſs certain than the geometrical.*"
—Yet ſtill he acknowledges, that after all—Faith muſt be given by God, and that *ſaving* faith ariſes not from demonſtrations.

The

The external evidence is to thoſe who are to *teach* the people, and to anſwer gainſayers, of great importance; and it is of importance to all, ſo far as it is within the reach of all, which ſome of it certainly is; but the internal evidence is the SEAL; and till that is applied and fixed, faith will be found to fluctuate, and the mind be led to waver, by the firſt ingenious objector, who may have recourſe to ſpecious learning, to plauſible ſophiſtry, or even to burleſque and ridicule.

Nothing could be farther from my intentions, than to ſet at nought the external evidence of Chriſtianity. All ſorts of evidence are to be deſired, which can by any means influence human beings, in fixing their choice, and directing their conduct, reſpecting matters which involve their happineſs, preſent and future. The external evidence may lead to the internal; as the light of a taper may ſerve to guide a wanderer out of a dark cavern, till he comes to the open day light, when the living luſtre of the Heavens will render the

the taper uſeleſs, and even extinguiſh its dim light by overpowering radiance.

But if men are to be taught of God, it has been aſked, will not the miniſtry be rendered uſeleſs? what is left for the clergy to do? I anſwer that God vouchſafes to teach by the inſtrumentality of men: and that the clergy have much to do, under the teaching of God, as miniſters of his grace. An order of men ſet apart for the ſtudy of ſacred things, and of eloquence requiſite to diſplay their beauty and value to the thoughtleſs and unfeeling, cannot but be highly uſeful and indeed neceſſary. God's ſpirit will aſſiſt, but not ſuperſede their endeavours in the miniſtry.

If men are to be taught of God, it has been aſked again, whether our own efforts will not become ſuperfluous? I anſwer, by no means. I ſet out in this treatiſe with endeavouring to fix in the mind as a maxim: "He that will know whether the doctrine of Chriſt be true, muſt "do his will." Moral and intellectual improvement muſt be as earneſtly ſought

as

as if there were no promiſe of ſupernatural aſſiſtance; juſt as the huſbandman muſt plough and ſow diligently, though he knows that the ſun and the ſhowers are abſolutely neceſſary to give the due increaſe.

Cavils, objections, and calumnious reproach will uſually ariſe from ſome quarter or other, whenever religious opinions are freely and artleſsly diſcuſſed.

The path of literary life that leads along the vale of obſcurity is the path of peace: and whoever ventures to bring forward the reſult of ſtudies in THEOLOGY is peculiarly expoſed to the ſhafts of angry oppoſition. All are intereſted in the ſubject, and they whoſe opinion is oppoſed feel diſpleaſure and expreſs contempt. The ſilent divine, who takes things as he finds them, will find the ſmootheſt and readieſt road to favour. It was this view of things which induced the celebrated Biſhop Hare to write his treatiſe on the difficulties and DISCOURAGEMENTS which attend the ſtudy of the Scriptures in the way of private judgment. He has the following remarkable

markable paſſage in that treatiſe: "Every "mean perſon (ſays he) who has no-"thing to recommend him but his ortho-"doxy, and owes that perhaps wholly to "his ignorance, will think (if you venture "to publiſh an unfaſhionable opinion) he "has a right to trample upon you with "contempt, to aſperſe your character with "virulent reflections, to run down your "writings as mean and pitiful perform-"ances, and give HARD NAMES to opinions "which he does not underſtand."

Such being the caſe, if a man had not learned a little Chriſtian Philoſophy, he would chooſe to ſpend his time in inglorious eaſe, and enjoying plenty, make, according to the advice of Cheſterfield, the world his bubble. But though exertion for the benefit of mankind, and diſtinction in conſequence of it, brings many pains and penalties, often creates enemies inſtead of friends, and injures worldly intereſt, yet knowledge is delightful, beneficence a duty, and every inconvenience which may ariſe from the diligent purſuit or diffuſion

of

of the one, and the faithful performance of the other, ſhould be borne with alacrity.

The proud and cenſorious ſpirit of the ſelf-honoured *Philoſopher*, and ſelf-named *rational* Chriſtian, ſhall never diſturb my complacency, ſo long as I find that the opinions which diſpleaſe them are ſuch as were maintained by the ornaments of this country and of human nature.

As one of my chief objects is to promote among mankind the gentler affections, to the excluſion or mitigation of all malice and revenge, I ſhall not riſk the loſs of my own good-humour, by entering into the bitterneſs of controverſy, however folly may miſunderſtand, or malevolence miſrepreſent me. They do no deſpite to me; let them beware leſt they do *deſpite to the ſpirit of grace* *.

* Heb. x. 29.

ERRATA.

Page 8. line 18. *for* polemical *read* controverſial.
44. —— 8. *dele* ſhould.
50. —— 21. *for* Payne *read* Paine.
161. —— 10. *for* inſert *read* aſſert.
204. —— 5. *for* words of grace *read* world of grace.
214. —— ult. *for* word *read* world.
248. —— 9. *for* Tureton *read* Turreton.
272. —— 23. *for* pretenſions *read* pretenſion.
297. —— 10. *dele* it.
ibid. —— 18. *for* Deus *read* Deum.
314. —— 18. *for* mythology *read* morality.
344. —— 4. *for* rugged *read* dark.
365. —— 6. *for* carity *read* charity.
405. —— 20. *for* præcipitentur *read* præcipitantèr.
451. —— 10. *for* προσεχη ϗ οτες *read* προσεχηκοτες.
455. —— 1. *for* inimitable *read* immutable.
456. —— 25. *for* aſſerunter *read* aſſeruntur.
460. —— 22. *for* αποβοβλειν *read* απυβαλειν.
461. —— 29. *dele* comma after ſtrepitum.
485. —— 15. *inſert* in the.
534. —— 1. *for* An. Dom. *read* from our Lord's Aſcenſion.
538. —— 19. *for* ενομιθησαν *read* ενομισθησαν.
545. —— 24. *dele* there.

MOTTOS AND NOTES TRANSLATED.

Title Page.

THIS kind of Philoſophy is founded on the feelings of the heart rather than on ſyllogiſms; it conſiſts in the actual conduct of life, rather than in diſputatious theories; it is inſpiration more than erudition; it is the reſult of a total CHANGE produced in the mind ſupernaturally, rather than of man's unaſſiſted reaſon.

Only be teachable; and you will have made a great proficiency in this PHILOSOPHY. It ſupplies its own inſtructor, even the SPIRIT, who imparts himſelf to none more readily than to men of ſimple and artleſs minds. On the other hand, while it condeſcends to the wants of the loweſt among mankind, it is an object of admiration to the higheſt.

And what elſe is the Chriſtian *Philoſophy*, (which Chriſt himſelf calls the *New Birth*,) but the renewal of that nature in us, which was originally well conſtituted by its Author?

'The life-giving Spirit. 1 Cor. xv. 45.

Section I. Page 1.

It is my object to inquire what is true; but not to acquieſce merely in the diſcovery of ſpeculative truth; but to find out that doctrine, which, together with truth, unites PIOUS AFFECTIONS to God.

Section II. Page 23.

In what conſiſts a faithful belief in Chriſt? It conſiſts in a faithful obedience to his commandments.

Section

Section IV. Page 45.

Mediately by the Word; immediately by the Spirit.

Section V. Page 48.

For grace is poured out upon all.

Section IX.

☞ The Greek paſſages in the notes are tranſlated in the text by Bp. Bull.

Section XIV. Page 140.

Neither let them oſtentatiouſly put themſelves off as *Philoſophers*; but labour to become men *taught of God.*

Section XIX. Page 170.

LEARNED I deem all thoſe who have believed the Goſpel. For why ſhould they be called *unlearned* who (ſuppoſing they have learned nothing elſe) have learned from the Apoſtles' creed that *ultramundane Philoſophy*, which neither a Pythagoras nor a Plato, but the Son of God himſelf, delivered to mankind; who have learned from Chriſt the end they ſhould purſue and the way to purſue it? Wherever *true Holineſs* exiſts, there alſo exiſts great Philoſophy, and no common kind and degree of erudition.

But yet among perſons thus excellently learned, thoſe are pre-eminent, to whom it is given by the Spirit's bountiful mercy, to inſtruct many in the ways of righteouſneſs; on whom God has beſtowed *lips*, not adorned with the meretricious arts of heathen eloquence, but richly furniſhed, by the unction of the Spirit, with heavenly Grace.

Section XXII. Page 188.

That energy reſembling fire.

If a preceptor, a mere man, heſitates to give merely human inſtruction; for inſtance, lectures on Logic or Arithmetic, to a pupil who is drowſy, who yawns, or who is ſick with the intemperance of yeſterday; how much more will the heavenly Wiſdom diſdain

diſdain to ſpeak with thoſe who are drunk with the pleaſures of the world, and who, from a total neglect of heavenly things, ſicken at the mention of them?

Theſe let him learn before the fumes of indigeſtion cloud over the faculties. Hor.

Section XXIII. Page 190.

The ſeaſon of Grace is, when God ſends you ſome humiliating affliction, which withdraws you from the world, becauſe you can no longer appear in it with honour. It is ſome diſgrace thrown upon you by a maſter, to whom a baſe obſequiouſneſs led you, in a thouſand ſtruggles, to ſacrifice the intereſts of your conſcience. It is the alienation of a friend, your connection with whom too often led you into the ſnares of vice and kept you there. It is the loſs of property, it is a diſeaſe, an uneaſineſs either domeſtic or from without; it is a ſtate of ſuffering, when every thing, but God, becomes bitter to a man, when he finds no conſolation but within himſelf; and when, diſguſted with the vanity and vexation of human affairs, he begins to taſte the ſweetneſs of things heavenly.

Section XXV. Page 202.

Between good men and God there ſubſiſts a friendſhip, under the mediation of virtue; a friendſhip do I ſay? It is more. It is an intimate union and reſemblance.

Section XXVI. Page 203.

In this part of literature alone, even what I do not underſtand, I yet revere.

Section XXIX. Page 220.

God cauſes to flow into the ſoul an unction which I cannot deſcribe, but which fills, or ſatisfies, it completely.

Section XXXIV. Page 247.

For if the whole of the interpoſition of God conſiſts in the clear propoſal of the Goſpel, opportunely made, why is omnipotence required for it? Why are thoſe magnificent expreſſions applied by St. Paul to deſcribe the *omnipotence* which God exerts in us?

Ep. i. 18, 19. "The eyes of your underſtanding being enlightened, that ye may know what is the *exceeding greatneſs of his power* to usward, who believe according to *the working of his mighty power.*"***

Is not this to extenuate the almighty energy of God, and almoſt to reduce it to nothing?

Section XXXVI. Page 255.

Immediate Grace, as the doctrine is taught by the orthodox, has nothing in common with enthuſiaſm, but differs from it in various reſpects.

1. Enthuſiaſm ſeeks *new* revelations *extrinſic* to the written word; but *immediate Grace* ſeeks none that are *new*, becauſe it always accompanies the word, and aims at nothing more than to impreſs the word more forcibly on the mind.

2. According to the tenets of enthuſiaſm, objects which are impreſſed on the mind come not from any thing external, but are ſuggeſted within by the Spirit and by ſecret inſpiration. But *here* (in the caſe of immediate Grace), the object is always ſuppoſed to come from ſomething external, and indeed to be ſought from the written word.

3. Enthuſiaſm is cauſed by ſudden emotions, which precede all reaſoning of diſcourſe, and ſometimes exclude them entirely. But the operation of the Spirit does not exclude, but takes with it reaſoning and the ready conſent of the will.

4. Laſtly, not to purſue any farther diſtinctions, enthuſiaſm does not produce a *change in the heart*, but affects the underſtanding, leaving the will unaltered;-whence it happens that enthuſiaſm may exiſt in wicked men, as it appears to have done in the inſtance of Balaam and others; but the operation of Grace neceſſarily produces a change in the heart and a love of holineſs.

Section XLII. Page 295.

I am of opinion that the *genuine Philoſophy of Chriſt* cannot be derived from any ſource ſo ſucceſsfully, as from the books of the Goſpel and the Epiſtles of the Apoſtles, in which, if a man philoſophiſes with a *pious ſpirit*, PRAYING rather than ARGUING, he will find that there is nothing conducive to the happineſs of man

man and the performance of any duty of human life, which is not, in ſome of theſe writings, laid down, diſcuſſed, and determined in a complete and ſatisfactory manner.

Section XLII. Page 297.

Our religion knows not to accept the perſons of men; neither does it regard the external condition, but the internal diſpoſition. It pronounces a man a lord or a ſlave according to his morals. The only liberty in the ſight of God is not to be the ſervant of ſin. The higheſt nobility before him is to become illuſtrious for virtue. HIERONYMUS, &c.

Nobility is the preſervation of the image of God, a reſemblance of the great model of all excellence, both which are effected by reaſon and virtue. GREG. NAZ.

When I ſpeak of nobility, I mean not that which the vulgar herd deem ſuch. Far from it. I mean that which piety and good morals characterize; and a return to the firſt good, to the original ſtate, from which human nature has fallen. *Idem.*

Section XLIV. Page 311.

Give me a man who is choleric, abuſive in his language, headſtrong and unruly; with a very few words, (the words of God,) I will render him as gentle as a lamb. Give me a greedy, miſerly, cloſe-fiſted man; and I will preſently return him to you a generous creature freely beſtowing his money by handfulls. Give me a cruel, blood-thirſty wretch; inſtantly his ferocity ſhall be transformed to a truly mild and merciful diſpoſition. Give me an unjuſt man, a fooliſh man, a ſinful man; and on a ſudden, he ſhall become honeſt, wiſe, and virtuous. In one LAVER (the laver of regeneration) all his wickedneſs ſhall be waſhed away. So great is the efficacy of the divine (or Chriſtian) Philoſophy; that when once admitted into the human heart, it expels FOLLY, the parent of all vice; and in accompliſhing this great end, there is no occaſion for any expence, no abſolute need of books or deep and long ſtudy or meditation. The benefit is conferred gratuitouſly, eaſily, expeditiouſly; provided that the ears and the heart thirſt after the wiſdom (from above). Did any, or could any, of

the heathen philoſophers accompliſh ſuch important purpoſes as theſe? LACT.

Section XLVI. Page 323.

The Spirit of God is delicate, *i. e.* eaſily diſguſted with moral impurity.

Section LV. Page 405.

Quid ſibi quiſque velit neſcire et quærere ſemper,
"Commutare locum," &c.

They know not what they would have, but are continually ſeeking CHANGE OF PLACE, in the hope of laying down the burden of time. Tired of home, one man leaves his noble manſion, as often as he can, and then returns to it all on a ſudden; juſt as miſerable abroad as at home. Another drives his horſes full ſpeed to his country houſe, daſhing along as if he had heard the houſe was on fire, and was haſtening to extinguiſh the flames. He no ſooner ſets his foot within the doors, than he begins to yawn or falls faſt aſleep; ſtriving to forget himſelf in ſlumbers;—or elſe he turns the horſes' heads and hurries poſt haſte up to town again. Thus every one tries to run away from himſelf; but he cannot eſcape a purſuer that ſticks cloſe to him, and torments him whether he will or no.

Apologetical Concluſion, Page 451.

The human mind is *perfected* not ſo much by *learning* divine things, as by paſſively receiving the impreſſions of Divinity.

Men are deceived on this account, becauſe they either adopt religion to the neglect of philoſophy; or ſtudy philoſophy alone, to the neglect of religion; whereas the one without the other cannot be what it ſtrictly ought to be. LACT.

Ibid. Page 455.

Our revealed religion is not, and indeed could not be any thing elſe but the law of nature advanced to perfection. VOLTAIRE.

Ibid. Page 456.

But now, thoſe topics which are aſſerted to be *peculiar* to Philoſophy, all of us (*Rhetoricians* as well as *Philoſophers*) treat of

of indiſcriminately; for who, even the worſt of men, heſitates to prate about the JUST, the EQUITABLE, and the GOOD?

QUINTILIAN.

Apologetical Concluſion, Page 461.

From the time of St. Auſtin, ſcarcely any word has been in more frequent uſe than the word GRACE, when the ſubject of diſcourſe is a man's return to a ſounder mind, and the *power* to which that return is to be aſcribed. But when the meaning of that word is aſked of them who uſe it, they can give no clear and definite anſwer. Hence it happened that in France a Jeſuit of a facetious turn jocoſely ſaid, "That this divine Grace which made ſuch a noiſe in the ſchools, and produced ſuch wonderful effects on the minds of men; this Grace, at once ſo efficacious and delightful, which triumphs over the hardneſs of the human heart, without deſtroying free will, was after all nothing more than what the French expreſs by the phraſe, *Je ne ſçais quoi.*"

Ibid. Page 490.

That little word *How* is deteſtable.

Ibid. Page 491.

The accurate and certain knowledge of actual *experience*, ſurpaſſes all that can be taught by the perſuaſive powers of oratory or compoſition.

Ibid. Page 507.

No man is a good man without the aſſiſtance of God.

SENECA.

God dwelling in the human body. *Idem.*

All mankind hold the opinion, that external advantages, ſuch as vineyards, corn fields, olive gardens, abundance of all the various fruits of the earth, laſtly every thing that tends to the accommodation and proſperity of life, is derived from the Gods; but no man ever acknowledged himſelf indebted to God for his VIRTUE. Undoubtedly this judgment is right and reaſonable. For we are *properly* commended for our *virtue*, and we *juſtly* glory in our virtue; which could not be, if it were a GIFT OF GOD, and not a poſſeſſion derived entirely from ourſelves. But different is the caſe when we receive any acceſſion of honour and fortune, or if we

get any unlooked-for advantage or avoid any imminent evil; for then, as we thank God for it, ſo we aſſume no merit or praiſe to ourſelves on the occaſion.

Did any man ever return thanks to the Gods that he was a good man? No; he returns thanks to the Gods becauſe he is a rich man, becauſe he has received ſome public honour, or becauſe he enjoys a ſtate of ſafety.

To return then to the point I am maintaining. It is the unanimous opinion of mankind, that ſucceſs or good fortune in the world is to be ſought of God, but that wiſdom is to be derived from oneſelf entirely. CICERO *de Nat.*

Our country (Rome) as well as Greece has produced many extraordinary men, not one of whom, can I believe, would ever have been ſuch, but by the aſſiſtance of God. *Ibid.*

No man was ever a great man without ſomething of divine inſpiration. CIC.

Is there any man of any country in the world who by the mere guidance of Nature could attain to virtue? CIC. *Legg.*

Men ſtand in need of God as an aſſiſtant and co-operator.

MAX. TYR.

APPENDIX, Page 545.

διηγησεις Narratives—παραδοσεις Traditions.

Page 583.

Songs dictated or inſpired by the Holy Spirit.

Page 590.

The doctrine of Chriſt, which at firſt knew nothing of *verbal diſputes*, began to depend on philoſophical ſtudies; this was the firſt ſtep which the Church made in its progreſſive deſcent to a ſtate of degeneracy.

Page 591.

O blindneſs of our earth-incruſted minds!
In what a midnight ſhade, what ſombrous clouds
Of error are our ſouls immerſed, when thou,
O Sun ſupreme! no longer deign'ſt to ſhine.
Why of the little knowledge ye attain
Vaunt ye yourſelves, poor mortals as ye are,
For that within us which thus thinks and ſees,
Not to ourſelves we owe: it comes from Heaven.

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SEC.

CHRISTIAN PHILOSOPHY:

OR,

THE EVIDENCE AND EXCELLENCE

OF

REVEALED RELIGION.

SECTION I.

Cupimus enim inveſtigare quid verum ſit; neque id ſolum, ſed quod cum veritate, PIETATEM quoque præterea erga Deum habeat conjunctam. SADOLET.

INTRODUCTORY.

I ENTER on the ſubject of this volume with unaffected diffidence. I tread on holy ground with awe. Though much of my life, devoted to letters from the earlieſt age, has been ſpent in reading the beſt writers on the Chriſtian doctrine, and more in contemplation of it, yet a ſenſe of its high importance, and of my own fallibility, has long reſtrained the impulſe which prompted me to engage in its public diſcuſſion.

cuſſion. Nothing but conſcious rectitude of intention, co-operating with the hope of obtaining the aid of God's holy Spirit and the reader's indulgence, could animate the tremulous mind in an enterpriſe to which it feels and avows itſelf unequal. A conviction that the ſubject is peculiarly ſeaſonable, has contributed to overcome reluctance. The TIMES indeed appear to me to call upon every profeſſor of Chriſtianity to vindicate, in the manner beſt adapted to his abilities and opportunities, its controverted truth, its inſulted honour; and if I ſhall be fortunate enough to communicate one ſuggeſtion to the wavering mind, which may conduce to this great purpoſe, my labour will not be in vain, nor my undertaking deemed raſhly adventurous. I ſhall have accompliſhed my wiſh. To diffuſe the ſun-ſhine of religious hope and confidence over the ſhadowy path of life; to diſſipate the gloom of doubt and deſpair; to ſave a ſoul from death; objects ſo deſirable, inſpire an ardour which enables zeal to triumph over timidity.

That

That unbelief in Chriſt is increaſing in the preſent age, and that the ſpirit of the times is rather favourable to its increaſe, has been aſſerted by high authority, and is too notorious to admit denial. The apoſtacy of a great nation, in the moſt enlightened and poliſhed part of Europe; the public, unbluſhing avowal of atheiſm among ſome of its leaders; the multiplication of books on the Continent, in which Chriſtianity is treated as a mere mode of fanaticiſm; all theſe circumſtances have combined, with others, to cauſe not only an indifference to the religion of Chriſt, but contempt and averſion to his very name. It were eaſy to cite contumelious reproaches of his perſon, as well as audacious denials of his claim to divine authority. But I will not pollute my page, which, however it may be deformed by error, ſhall not be ſtained with the tranſfuſion of blaſphemy. It is to be wiſhed that all ſuch works could be conſigned to immediate and everlaſting oblivion; but, I am ſorry to ſay that they are diffuſed

with an induſtry, which, if it appeared in making proſelytes to virtue, would be in the higheſt degree meritorious. Almoſt every individual in our own country can now read; and manuals of infidelity, replete with plauſible arguments, in language level to the loweſt claſſes, are circulated among the people, at a price which places them within reach of the pooreſt reader. They are deſpiſed by the rich and neglected by the learned, but they fall into the hands of the poor, to whom any thing in *print* bears the ſtamp of authority. At the ſame time, it muſt be lamented that there are treatiſes of a higher order, on the ſide of infidelity, which come recommended to the ſuperior ranks, to men of knowledge and education, with all the charms of wit and elegance.

But it cannot be ſaid that the apologiſts and defenders of Chriſtianity, in our country, have been few, or unfurniſhed with abilities natural and acquired. Great have been the efforts of our profoundeſt ſcholars, both profeſſional divines and laymen, in

in maintaining the cauſe of Chriſtianity, and repelling by argument, by ridicule, by invective, by erudition, the aſſaults of the infidel. But what ſhall we ſay? Notwithſtanding their ſtupendous labours, continued with little intermiſſion, the great cauſe which they maintained, is evidently, at this moment, on the decline. Though many of them, not contented with perſuaſion and argument, have profeſſed to DEMONSTRATE the truth of the Chriſtian religion, it is certain that a very great number of men in Chriſtian countries continue unperſuaded, unconvinced, and totally blind to their *demonſtration*. Such being the caſe, after all their voluminous productions, is it not fair to conclude that their modes of defence, however celebrated, are either erroneous or defective? Had their ſucceſs been equal to their labours and pretenſions, infidelity muſt now have been utterly exterminated.

I feel a ſincere reſpect for the learned labours of theologiſts, the ſubtilty of ſchoolmen, the erudition of critics, the

ingenuity of controverſialiſts; but I cannot help thinking that their productions have contributed rather to the amuſement of recluſe ſcholars already perſuaded of Chriſtianity, than to the converſion of the infidel, the inſtruction of the PEOPLE. It appears to me, that ſome of the moſt elaborate of the writings in defence of Chriſtianity are too cold in their manner, too metaphyſical or abſtruſe in their arguments, too little animated with the ſpirit of piety, to produce any great or durable effect on the heart of man, formed as he is, not only with intellectual powers, but with fine feelings and a glowing imagination. They touch not the trembling fibres of ſenſibility. They are inſipid to the palate of the people. They have no attractions for the POOR, the great multitude to whom the *goſpel* was particularly *preached*. They are ſcarcely intelligible but to ſcholars in their cloſets, and while they amuſe, without convincing the underſtanding, they leave the moſt ſuſceptible part of man, his boſom, unaffected.

The

The buſy world, eager in purſuit of wealth, honour, pleaſure, pays them no regard; though they are the very perſons whoſe attention to religion, which they are too apt to forget entirely, ought chiefly to be ſolicited. The academic recluſe, the theologiſt by profeſſion, may read them as a taſk or as an amuſement; but he conſiders them as works of erudition and exerciſes of ingenüity, claiming great praiſe as the product of literary leiſure, but little adapted to impreſs the heart, or convert the infidel and the profligate. The people are *erring and ſtraying* like loſt ſheep, but in theſe calls they cannot recognize the voice of the ſhepherd. Such works indeed ſeldom reach the people; and while they are celebrated in academic cloiſters, their very exiſtence is unknown among the haunts of men, in the buſy hum of cities; where it is moſt deſirable that they ſhould be known, becauſe there the great majority of human creatures is aſſembled, and there alſo the poiſon of temptation chiefly requires the antidote of religion. What

avails it that defences of Chriſtianity are very learned and very ſubtle, if they are ſo dry and unaffecting as to be confined in their effects to ſequeſtered ſcholars, far removed from the active world, and probably ſo firmly ſettled in the faith, as to require no new perſuaſives, no additional proofs to render them faithful followers of Jeſus Chriſt?

Apologies and attacks of this kind have very little effect in ſilencing infidel writers or changing their opinions. They frequently furniſh freſh matter for diſpute, and indeed put arms into the hands of the enemy. By provoking diſcuſſion on points which were at reſt, they raiſe ſophiſtry from its ſlumbers, and blow the trumpet of polemical wars, which do great miſchief before the re-eſtabliſhment of peace. In the iſſue, the contending parties are ſilenced rather from wearineſs in the conteſt, than from conviction; and *Te Deum*, as is uſual in other wars, is ſung by thoſe who are ſaid to be vanquiſhed, as well as thoſe who claim the honour of undiſputed victory.

Thus

Thus it has happened that the writings of men, no leſs benevolent in their intentions than able in their exertions, have ſometimes not only done no good to their cauſe, but great injury. They have revived old cavils and objections, or invented new, in order to diſplay ingenuity in refuting them; cavils and objections which have frequently been anſwered, or which might never have occurred; but which, when once they *have* occurred, produce *ſuſpicion* and unſettled notions on topics never doubted, and among honeſt men whoſe faith was firmly eſtabliſhed. Such conduct is like that of a phyſician, who ſhould adminiſter doſes of arſenic to his patients, in order to prove to them, at their riſk, the ſovereign power of his *noſtrum*. The venom, finding a conſtitution favourable to its operation, triumphantly prevails, and the preventive remedy cannot reſcue the ſufferer from his hapleſs fate.

I am perſuaded, that even a ſenſible, thinking, and learned man might live his

whole life in piety and peace, without ever dreaming of thoſe objections to Chriſtianity, which ſome of its moſt celebrated defenders have collected together from all ages and a great variety of *neglected* books, and then combined in a ſingle portable volume, ſo as to render it a convenient SYNOPSIS *of infidelity*. What muſt be the conſequence? It muſt at leaſt diſturb the repoſe of the ſenſible, thinking, and learned man; and if it ſhould be read and underſtood by the ſimple, the unlearned, the unthinking, and the *ill-diſpoſed*, I am of opinion that its *objections* would be ſtudied, its *ſolutions* neglected; and thus a very large number of *recruits* enliſted volunteers in the army of unbelievers.

As an exemplification of what I have here advanced, I mention, in this place, Biſhop Warburton's View of Lord Bolingbroke's Philoſophy. There the unbeliever ſees the ſcattered arguments of ſcepticiſm and unbelief all picked and culled for him, without any trouble of his own, and marked with inverted commas, ſo as to direct

rect the eye, without loſs of time, to their immediate peruſal. The book becomes an *anthologia* of infidelity. The flowers are gathered from the ſtalks, and conveniently tied up in a noſegay. The eſſence is extracted and put into a phial commodious for the pocket, and fitted for hourly uſe. The late biſhop Horne, in his facetious Letters on Infidelity, has alſo collected paſſages from *obſcure* books and pamphlets, and ſent them abroad in ſuch a manner as muſt of neceſſity cauſe them to be read and received, where they never would have found their way by their native force. Theſe ingenious and well-meaning divines reſuſcitate the dead, and give life to the ſtill-born or abortive offspring of dullneſs and malignity. I might mention many more inſtances of ſimilar imprudence, in men of the deepeſt erudition and the ſincereſt piety; but I am unwilling to follow their example, in pointing out to unbelievers compendiums, abridgments, and manuals of ſceptical cavil. To ſay in their excuſe that they *refute* thoſe arguments

which they inſert ſo liberally from the writings of the unbeliever, may prove our candour, but not our judgment or knowledge of human nature. Evil is learned ſooner and remembered longer than good; and it would be better to let many pamphlets of the deiſts ſink into oblivion, than to preſerve and extend them, by extracting their moſt noxious parts, and mixing them with the productions of men of learning and piety. The refutations are often long, laboured, and tedious, while the objections are ſhort and lively. They are therefore either not read or ſoon forgotten, while a flippant ſarcaſm attracts attention and fixes itſelf in the memory. It muſt alſo be allowed, that the refutations are too often unſatisfactory: and that the weakneſs of a defence invites new attacks, and gives freſh courage to the enemy.

I think the ſtyle and manner of ſome among the celebrated defenders of Chriſtianity extremely improper. It is not reſpectful. It treats *Jeſus Chriſt* as if he were an inferior to the perſon who takes upon

upon him to examine, as he phraſes it, the *pretenſions* of Jeſus Chriſt. To ſpeak in an authoritative, inquiſitorial language of the author of that religion by which the writer himſelf profeſſes to hope for ſalvation, can never ſerve the cauſe of Chriſtianity. Think of a poor, frail, ſinful, mortal ſitting a ſelf-appointed judge, and like a lawyer in a human court of judicature, arraigning Jeſus Chriſt, the Lord of life, juſt as a venal ſolicitor might have queſtioned the two thieves that were crucified with him, had they been accuſed at a modern police-office. The cold yet authoritative ſtyle of the tribunal has been much uſed in *examining*, as it is called, that religion which brought life and immortality to light through the goſpel. You would think the learned theologiſt, who aſſumes the office of an examiner, another Pontius Pilate. He ſits in the ſeat of judgment, and with judicial importance coldly pronounces on the words and actions of that Saviour, whom he owns to be the great Captain of ſalvation.

In

In ſuch defences or examinations, Jeſus Chriſt is ſpoken of in terms that muſt diveſt him of his *glory*, and therefore vilify him in the eyes of the gainſayers, and all unthinking people. But how, on the contrary, do the *prophets* repreſent him? Language has no terms of magnificence adequate to his dignity.

The prophets deſcribe JESUS CHRIST as the moſt auguſt perſonage which it is poſſible to conceive. They ſpeak of him indeed as the ſeed of *the woman* and the *Son of man*; but at the ſame time deſcribe him of celeſtial race. They announce him as a being exalted above men and angels; above "all principality and power; as the "Word and the Wiſdom of God, as the "eternal Son of the Father; as the Heir "of all things, by whom God made the "worlds; as the brightneſs of God's glory, "the expreſs image of his perſon."

Thus ſpeak the prophets of our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt. Now let us hear an ingenious apologiſt and defender of him and his religion. A reverend author,

author, highly eſtimable for his learning and ingenuity, and whom I ſincerely eſteem, ſpeaking of Jeſus Chriſt, in a book profeſſedly written to vindicate his truth and honour, repeatedly calls him, "a Jewiſh *peaſant*," and a "*peaſant* of "Galilee." For what are we comparing? ſays he, (in a compariſon of Jeſus Chriſt with Mahomet,) "a Galilean "PEASANT, accompanied with a few fiſh-"ermen, with a conqueror at the head of "his army;" and again, in the next page, "a Jewiſh PEASANT overthrew the reli-"gion of the world."

Unbelievers are commonly men of the world; faſcinated by its pomps and vanities. Is it the moſt likely means to overcome their prejudices, and teach them to bow the knee to Jeſus, thus to lower his perſonal dignity? Was there any occaſion for it? Do not the prophets, as I have juſt now obſerved, exalt him above every name? Why call him PEASANT? The term I think by no means appropriate to him, ſuppoſing that it were not an injudi-

cious degradation of his character in the eyes of unthinking worldlings and malignant unbelievers. There is ſomething peculiarly diſguſting in hearing dignified eccleſiaſtics, living in ſplendour and affluence entirely in conſequence of the religion of Jeſus Chriſt, ſpeaking of him in their defences of his religion, as a PEASANT, as a perſon compared to themſelves, vile and deſpicable. Such arguments as this appellation is meant to ſupport, will never render ſervice to Chriſtianity. The repreſentation becomes a ſtumbling-block and a rock of offence. I might however produce ſeveral other inſtances of great writers who have afforded precedents for ſuch degrading appellations of Jeſus Chriſt. But neither the infidel nor the Chriſtian will eaſily believe that the man who calls his Saviour a *peaſant*, after the glorious repreſentations of him which the prophets give, feels that awe and veneration which is due to the Son of God, the Lord of life, the Saviour and Redeemer. I forbear to ſpecify them. One inſtance is ſufficient to point

point out my meaning, and ſhew the reaſon why ſome ingenious apologies for Chriſtianity are totally ineffectual.

Dry argumentation and dull diſquiſition, unanimated by the ſpirit of piety and devotion, will never avail to convert unbelievers, and to diffuſe the doctrines of Chriſtianity. Life, death, heaven and hell, are ſubjects of too much importance to be treated by a ſincere mind, duly impreſſed by them, with the coolneſs of a lawyer giving an opinion on a ſtatute or caſe in which *another*'s property or privileges are concerned. The ſpirit of piety ſeems to have been wanting in ſome of the moſt logical and metaphyſical defenders of Chriſtianity. They ſpeak of Chriſt, when they are examining the truth of the doctrine, with calm indifference, as if they were dull virtuoſos diſcuſſing the genuineneſs of a medal, or the authenticity of a manuſcript, valuable only as an amuſing curioſity. If St. Paul had been no warmer an advocate than certain famous apologiſts for Chriſt's doctrine, he would never have prevailed

prevailed with the Gentiles to relinquiſh their polytheiſm, and we of this iſland ſhould, at this day, have remained in the darkneſs of idolatry. Without the ſpirit of piety, all proofs and defences of Chriſtianity are a dead letter. The multitude will not even read them; and infidels, if they do not deſpiſe them too much to attend to them at all, will only read to find freſh matter for cavil and objection.

I may be wrong in my theory. I therefore appeal to fact. The fact is evident, that, notwithſtanding all that has been written to *demonſtrate* Chriſtianity, by argument drawn from reaſoning and hiſtory, infidelity has increaſed, and is every day increaſing more and more. Let thoſe who think the dry argumentative apologies irreſiſtibly convincing, now bring them forward, and ſilence the gainſayers at once. The demonſtrations of a Huet, the evidences of a Clarke, the reaſonings of a Locke, a Grotius, a Hartley, ſhould be preſented in the moſt ſtriking manner, by public authority, and if they are really efficacious in producing conviction,

conviction, we may be aſſured that infidelity will vaniſh at their appearance, like the miſts of an autumnal morning, when the meridian ſun breaks forth in full ſplendour. But the truth is, they are already very much diffuſed, and yet the Chriſtian religion is ſaid to be rapidly on the decline.

Therefore it cannot be blameable to attempt ſome other method of calling back the attention of erring mortals to the momentous truths of revelation.

I have conceived an idea that our *old* Engliſh divines were great adepts in genuine Chriſtianity, and that their method of recommending it was judicious, becauſe I know it was ſucceſsful. There was much more piety in the laſt century than in the preſent; and there is every reaſon to believe that infidelity was rare. Biſhop Hall appears to me to have been animated with the true ſpirit of Chriſtianity; and I beg leave to convey my own ideas on the beſt method of diffuſing that ſpirit, in his pleaſingly-pious and ſimple language.

" There

" There is not," ſays the venerable prelate, " ſo much need of learning as of " grace to *apprehend* thoſe things which " concern our *everlaſting peace*; neither is " it our *brain* that muſt be ſet to work, " but our HEARTS. However excellent " the uſe of ſcholarſhip in all the ſacred " employments of divinity; yet, in the " main act, which imports ſalvation, *ſkill* " muſt give place to AFFECTION. Happy is " the ſoul that is poſſeſt of Chriſt, how " poor ſoever in all inferior endowments. " Ye are wide, O ye great wits, while ye " ſpend yourſelves in curious queſtions " and learned extravagancies. Ye ſhall " find one touch of Chriſt more worth to " your ſouls than all your deep and labo- " rious diſquiſitions. *In vain ſhall ye ſeek* " *for this in your books*, if you miſs it in " your BOSOMS. If you know all things, " and cannot ſay *I know whom I have be-* " *lieved*, you have but knowledge enough " to know yourſelves completely miſera- " ble. The deep myſteries of Godlineſs, " which, to the *great clerks* of the world,

" are

" are as a book claſped and ſealed up, lie " open before him, (the pious and de- " vout man,) fair and legible; and while " thoſe *book-men* know whom they have " heard of, *he knows whom he hath be-* " *lieved.*"

Chriſtianity indeed, like the ſun, diſcovers itſelf by its own luſtre. It ſhines with unborrowed light on the devout heart. It wants little external proof, but carries its own evidence to him that is regenerate and born of the Spirit. " The truth of Chriſ- " tianity," ſays a pious author, " is the " Spirit of God living and working " in it; and when this Spirit is not the " life of it, there the outward form " is but like the carcaſe of a departed " ſoul."

Divinity has certainly been confuſed and perplexed by the learned. It requires to be diſentangled and ſimplified. It appears to me to conſiſt in this ſingle point, the reſtoration of the *divine life*, the image of God, (loſt or defaced at the fall,) by the operation of the Holy Ghoſt.

When

When this is reſtored, every other advantage of Chriſtianity follows in courſe. PURE MORALS are abſolutely neceſſary to the reception of the Holy Ghoſt, and an unavoidable conſequence of his continuance. The attainment of GRACE is then the UNUM NECESSARIUM. It includes in it all goſpel comfort, it teaches all virtue, and infallibly leads to LIGHT, life, and immortality.

SEC-

SECTION II.

On the Sort of Evidence chiefly recommended and attempted to be diſplayed in this Treatiſe.

Quid eſt fideliter Chriſto credere? eſt fideliter Dei mandata ſervare. SALVIAN. *de. Gub. lib.* 3.

I THINK it right to apprize my reader, on the very threſhold, that if he expects a recapitulation of the external and hiſtorical evidence of Chriſtianity, he will be diſappointed. For all ſuch evidence I muſt refer him to the great and illuſtrious names of voluminous theologiſts, who have filled with honour the profeſſional chairs of univerſities, and ſplendidly adorned the annals of literature. I revere their virtuous characters; I highly appreciate their learned labours; I think the ſtudent who is abſtracted from active life, and poſſeſſes leiſure, may derive from them much *amuſement*, while he increaſes his ſtores of

of critical erudition, and becomes enabled to *diſcourſe* or *diſpute* on theology. But men, able to command their time, and competently furniſhed with ability for deep and extenſive inveſtigation, are but a ſmall number in the maſs of mankind. That ſyſtematic or ſpeculative treatiſe which may delight and inſtruct ſuch men, in the cool ſhade of philoſophical retirement, will have little effect on the minds of others who conſtitute the multitude of mortals, eagerly engaged in providing for the wants of the paſſing day, or warmly contending for the glittering prizes of ſecular ambition. Indeed, I never heard that the laborious proofs of Chriſtianity, in the hiſtorical and argumentative mode, ever converted any of thoſe celebrated *authors* on the ſide of infidelity, who have, from time to time, ſpread an alarm through Chriſtendom, and drawn forth the defenſive pens of every church and univerſity in Europe. The infidel wits wrote on in the ſame cauſe; deriving freſh matter for cavil from the arguments of the defenders; and re-aſſail-

ing the citadel with the very balls hurled from its battlements in ſuperfluous profuſion.

What then, it may be juſtly aſked, have I to offer? What is the ſort of evidence which I attempt to diſplay? It is an internal EVIDENCE of the truth of the goſpel, conſequent on OBEDIENCE to its precepts. It is a ſort of evidence, the mode of obtaining which is pointed out by JESUS CHRIST himſelf, in the following declaration: "If any man will do HIS will, he "ſhall KNOW of the DOCTRINE whether it "be of God *."

But how ſhall he know? BY THE ILLUMINATION OF THE HOLY SPIRIT OF GOD, which is promiſed by Chriſt, to thoſe who do his will.

Therefore if any man ſeriouſly and earneſtly deſires to become a Chriſtian, let him *begin*, whatever doubts he may entertain of the truth of Chriſtianity, by *practiſing* thoſe moral virtues, and cultivating thoſe amiable diſpoſitions, which the written goſpel plainly requires, and the *grace*

* John, vii. 17.

of God will gradually remove the veil from his eyes and from his heart, ſo as to enable him to ſee and to love the things which belong to his peace, and which are revealed in the goſpel only. Let him make the experiment and *perſevere*. The reſult will be full conviction that Chriſtianity is true. The ſanctifying Spirit will precede, and the illuminating Spirit follow in conſequence.

I take it for granted, that God has given all men the means of knowing that which it imports all men to know; but if, in order to gain the knowledge requiſite to become a Chriſtian, it is neceſſary to read ſuch authors as Grotius, Limborch, Clarke, Lardner, or Warburton, how few, in the great maſs of mankind, can poſſibly acquire that knowledge and conſequent faith which are neceſſary to their ſalvation?

But every human being is capable of the *evidence* which ariſes from the divine illumination. It is offered to all. And they who reject it, and ſeek only the evidence which human means afford, ſhut out

out the ſun, and content themſelves either with total darkneſs or the feeble light of a taper.

" There is" (ſays the excellent Biſhop Sanderſon) " to the outward tender of " grace in the miniſtry of the goſpel, an- " nexed an *inward* offer of the ſame to " the HEART, by the SPIRIT of *God going* " *along with his* WORD, which ſome of the " ſchoolmen call *auxilium gratiæ generale*, " ſufficient *of itſelf* to convert the ſoul of " the hearer, if he do not reſiſt the Holy " Ghoſt, and reject the grace offered; " which, as it is grounded on theſe words, " *Behold I ſtand at the door and knock*, " and upon very many paſſages of *ſcrip-* " *ture* beſide, ſo it ſtandeth with *reaſon* " that the offer, *if accepted*, ſhould be " *ſufficient, ex parte ſua*, to do the work, " which, if *not* accepted, is ſufficient to " leave the perſon, not accepting the " ſame, inexcuſable."

The outward teſtimony to the truth of the goſpel, is certainly a very ſtrong one; but yet it is found inſufficient without the

inward teſtimony. The beſt underſtandings have remained unconvinced by the *outward teſtimony*; while the meaneſt have been fully perſuaded by the co-operation of the *inward*, the divine irradiation of the Holy Ghoſt ſhining upon and giving luſtre to the *letter* of revelation.

But becauſe the doctrine of divine influence on the human mind is obnoxious to obloquy, I think it neceſſary to ſupport it by the authority of ſome of the beſt men and ſoundeſt divines of this nation. Such are the prejudices entertained by many againſt the doctrine of divine influence and the witneſs of the Spirit, that I cannot proceed a ſtep farther, with hope of ſucceſs, till I have laid before my reader ſeveral paſſages in confirmation of it, from the writings of men who were the ornaments of their times, and who are at this day eſteemed no leſs for their orthodoxy and powers of reaſon than their eloquence. I make no apology to my reader for the length of the quotations from them, becauſe I am ſure he will be a gainer, if I keep

I keep ſilence that they may be heard in the interval. My object is to re-eſtabliſh a declining opinion, which I think not only true, but of prime importance. I therefore withdraw myſelf occaſionally, that I may introduce thoſe advocates for it, whoſe very names muſt command attention. If I can but be *inſtrumental* in reviving the true Spirit of Chriſtianity, by citing their authority, theirs be the praiſe, and mine the humble office of recommending and extending their ſalutary doctrine.

" And if it ſhall be aſked (to expreſs myſelf nearly in the words of Archbiſhop Wake) why I ſo often chuſe the drudgery of a *tranſcriber*, the reaſon is ſhortly this: I hoped that quotations from departed writers of great and deſerved fame would find a more general and unprejudiced acceptance with all ſorts of men, than any thing that could be written by any one now living, who, if eſteemed by ſome, is yet in danger of being deſpiſed by more; whoſe prejudice to his perſon will not ſuffer them to reap any

benefit by any thing, however uſeful, that can come from him; while ſuch paſſages as theſe which I cite muſt excite reſpect and attention, unmixed (as the authors are dead) with any malignant ſentiment or prepoſſeſſion againſt them, ſuch as might cloſe the eyes of the underſtanding againſt the radiance of truth *."

* The following text may, I think, confirm the opinion advanced in this Section, that the *beſt* EVIDENCE will ariſe from OBEDIENCE:

" And we are his witneſſes of theſe things; and " ſo is alſo the HOLY GHOST, whom God hath " given to them that OBEY him." Acts, v. 37.

SECTION III.

On the Prejudices entertained againſt this Sort of Evidence, and againſt all divine and ſupernatural Influence on the Mind of Man.

SINCE the time of Archbiſhop Laud, the moſt celebrated defenders of Chriſtianity have thought it proper to expatiate, with peculiar zeal, on the excellence of natural religion. They probably had reaſons for their conduct; but it muſt not be diſſembled, that in extolling natural religion they have appeared to depreciate or ſuperſede revelation. The doctrine of *ſupernatural aſſiſtance*, the great privilege of Chriſtianity, has been very little enforced by them, and indeed rather diſcountenanced, as ſavouring of enthuſiaſm, and claiming, if true, a decided ſuperiority over their favourite religion of nature.

Upon this ſubject, a very ſenſible writer thus expreſſes his opinion:

" Towards making and forming a " Chriſtian, if *ſupernatural aſſiſtance* of " the divine Spirit was neceſſary at the " beginning of the goſpel, I do not ſee " what ſhould render it leſs neceſſary at " any time ſince, nor why it may not be " expected NOW. Human learning and " human wiſdom have raſhly and vainly " uſurped the place of it.

" It is obſervable that theſe *old* princi- " ples are ſtill to be found among diſſen- " ters, in a good meaſure, which is the " reaſon why their opponents have drop- " ed the uſe of them.

" As theſe doctrines were the princi- " ples and language of the diſſenters, and " others, who followed the ſtandard of " the Parliament againſt King Charles the " Firſt, though they were not the parti- " cular motives of the war, nor could con- " tract any juſt blame from the unhappy " iſſue of that war; yet, at the reſtoration " of King Charles the Second, the reſent-

" ment

" ment which took place againſt the per-
" ſons of the diſſenters, and ran high, I
" apprehend, led the church clergy not
" only to be angry with the *men*, but to
" forſake their principles too, though right
" and innocent in themſelves, and afore-
" time held in common among all Pro-
" teſtants."

This, the author thinks, gave riſe to the exceſſive zeal for enforcing natural religion, and for mere moral preaching, to the excluſion of the diſtinguiſhing doctrines of Chriſt, and particularly thoſe ſublime myſteries reſpecting the operation of the Holy Ghoſt, the very life and ſoul of Chriſtianity.

" Every thing," ſays he, " beſides *mo-*
" *rality* began, from that time, to be
" branded with the odious term of *enthu-*
" *ſiaſm* and *hypocriſy*. That the cauſe of
" religion (obſerves the ſame writer) has
" declined for many years, every perſon
" appears ſenſible. Among the various
" reaſons aſſigned for it, the principal,
" in my opinion, is, that the eſtabliſhed

" miniſters have ſuffered it to die in their " own hands, by departing from the old " method of preaching, and from their " firſt and original tenets; which has given " countenance to what is called natural " religion, in ſuch a meaſure, as to ſhut " out revealed religion and ſuperſede the " goſpel.

" It is in vain to cry out againſt deiſts " and infidels, when the Proteſtant watch- " men have deſerted their poſt, and them- " ſelves have opened a gap for the enemy. " Learning and oratory, it muſt be own- " ed, are arrived at great perfection, but our " *true old divinity* is gone. Amid theſe ſplen- " did trifles, the GOSPEL is *really* LOST *."

It is certain, that the profligate court of Charles the Second, in its endeavours to diſcredit the diſſenters, many of whom were admirable ſcholars and divines, as well as holy and exemplary men in private life, contributed much to explode all doctrines concerning the SPIRIT. Unfortunately thoſe clergymen who wiſhed to be

* See a Letter ſigned *Paulinus*, publiſhed in 1735.

favoured at court, too eaſily conformed their doctrines to its wiſhes; and arguments from the pulpit united with ſarcaſms from the ſeat of the ſcorner, to render all who maintained the doctrine of grace ſuſpected of enthuſiaſm and hypocriſy. Ridicule, in the hands of the author of Hudibras, though intended only to ſerve political purpoſes, became a weapon that wounded religion in its vitals.

The ſect of Chriſtians denominated Quakers certainly entertain many right notions reſpecting divine influence: and therefore, as the Quakers were diſliked by the church, the doctrines which they maintained were to be treated with contempt. The SPIRIT, whoſe operations they juſtly maintain, became, under the direction of worldly policy, a word of reproach to them. Conſequently aſpiring clergymen, wiſhing to avoid every doctrine which could retard their advancement, or fix a ſtigma of heterodoxy upon them, were very little inclined to preach the neceſſity of divine illumination. They feared the

opprobrious names of enthuſiaſts or hypocrites, and ſo became aſhamed of the goſpel of Chriſt.

In proceſs of time, aroſe the ſect of the Methodiſts; who, however they may be miſtaken in ſome points, are certainly orthodox in their opinions of the divine agency on the human ſoul. They found it in the ſcriptures, in the liturgy, in the articles, and they preached it with a zeal which to many appeared intemperate, and certainly was ſometimes too little guided by diſcretion. The conſequence was, that the *ſpiritual doctrines*, already vilified by the court of Charles the Second, and by the adverſaries of the Quakers, became objects of general diſlike and deriſion.

In the meantime, the goſpel of Jeſus Chriſt ſuffered by its profeſſed friends as well as declared enemies. Regular divines of great virtue, learning, and true piety feared to preach the Holy Ghoſt and its operations, the main doctrine of the goſpel, leſt they ſhould countenance the Puritan, the Quaker, or the Methodiſt, and

loſe the eſteem of their own order, or of the higher powers. They often contented themſelves, during a long life, with preaching morality only; which, without the Spirit of Chriſtianity, is like a beautiful ſtatue from the hand of a Bacon; however graceful its ſymmetry and poliſhed its materials, yet wanting the breath of LIFE, it is ſtill but a block of marble.

Theſe prejudices remaining at this day, I have thought it right to recommend the ſort of evidence which this book attempts to diſplay, by citing the *authority* of great divines, who, uninfluenced by ſecular hopes or fears, have borne witneſs to the truth as it is in Jeſus. They are among the moſt celebrated theologiſts of this nation; and ſuch as few among living or recent writers will preſume to vie with, in extent of knowledge, in power of expreſſion, and zeal for Chriſtianity.

Bitter is the anger of controverſialiſts in divinity. Arrows dipt in venom are uſually hurled at a writer, who ventures to recommend a doctrine which they diſapprove.

I muſt

I muſt ſeek ſhelter under the ſhields of ſuch men as Biſhop Taylor, Doctor Iſaac Barrow, and others, in and out of the eſtabliſhment, who fought a good fight and KEPT THE FAITH, having no regard to worldly and ſiniſter motives, but faithfully endeavouring to lead thoſe, over whom they were appointed guides, by the radiance of goſpel light, from the ſhadowy mazes of error into the pleaſant paths of piety and peace.

Whatever *obloquy may follow the teaching of ſuch doctrine*, I ſhall incur it with alacrity, becauſe I believe it to be the truth, and that the happineſs of human nature is highly concerned in its general reception. I will humbly ſay, therefore, with St. Paul, "I am not aſhamed of the "goſpel of Chriſt Jeſus, for it is the "POWER of God unto ſalvation *."

And as to thoſe who deny the doctrine of divine influence, I *fear* they are guilty of blaſphemy againſt the Holy Ghoſt. I

* Rom. i. 16.

ſpeak

ſpeak diffidently, as it becomes every mortal on a ſubject ſo momentous; but let thoſe who are eager to deny and even deride the doctrine, conſider duly what is meant by the ſin againſt the Holy Ghoſt, and let them remember this tremendous declaration of our Saviour himſelf, that BLASPHEMY AGAINST THE HOLY GHOST SHALL NOT BE FORGIVEN*. All other ſins, we are expreſsly told, may be remitted, but on this the gates of mercy are cloſed. The denial of the Spirit's energy renders the goſpel of no effect, extinguiſhes the living light of Jeſus Chriſt, and involves wretched mortals in the darkneſs and death of Adam, fallen from the ſtate of primitive perfection. It is repreſented as the greateſt of all ſins, becauſe it is productive of the greateſt miſery.

* Matth. xii. 31.

SECTION IV.

The proper Evidence of the Chriſtian Religion is the Illumination of the Holy Ghoſt, ſhining into the Hearts of thoſe who do not cloſe them againſt its Entrance. The Opinion of Dr. Glouceſter Ridley cited.

NONE, ſays St. Paul, can ſay JESUS IS THE LORD, but by the HOLY GHOST *. If, then, St. Paul be allowed to have underſtood the Chriſtian religion, it is certain, that mere *human teſtimony* will never convince the infidel, and produce that faith which conſtitutes the true Chriſtian. Our theological libraries might be cleared of more than half their volumes, if men ſeeking the EVIDENCE of *Chriſtianity*, would be ſatisfied with the declaration of St. Paul, and of the great Author of our religion.

* 1 Cor. xii. 3.

There

There is a faith very common in the world, which teaches to believe, as an hiſtorical fact, that a perſon of the name of Jeſus, a very good man, did live on earth, and that he preached and taught, under the direction of God or divine Providence, an excellent ſyſtem of morality; ſuch as, if duly obſerved, would contribute to their happineſs, and recommend them to divine favour. But this kind of faith is not the right faith; it believes not enough, it is not given by the *Holy Ghoſt*; for he, in whom God dwelleth, confeſſeth that Jeſus is the Son of God, and the SAVIOUR of the world*; but they who acknowledge Jeſus only as a good man teaching morality, know him not as a SAVIOUR. Socrates taught fine morality; and ſo did Seneca, Epictetus, and many more; but they had not and could not teach the knowledge which leadeth to ſalvation.

"Illuminating grace," ſays Dr. Glouceſter Ridley, "conſiſts not in the aſſent

* 1 John, iv. 13, 14, 15.

"we

" we give to the HISTORY of the goſpel,
" as a narration of matters of fact, ſuffi-
" ciently ſupported by HUMAN EVIDENCE;
" for this may be purely the effect of our
" ſtudy and learning. The collating of
" copies, the conſulting of hiſtory, the
" comparing the aſſertions of friends, and
" the conceſſions of enemies, may NECES-
" SITATE * ſuch a belief, a faith which
" the devils may have, and doubtleſs have
" it. This ſort of faith is an *acquiſition* of
" our own, and not a GIFT." But FAITH IS THE GIFT OF GOD.

" There may be a faith," continues Dr. Ridley, " which is not the work of
" the Spirit in our hearts, but entirely the
" effect of human means, our natural fa-
" culties aſſiſted by languages, antiquities,
" manuſcripts, criticiſm, and the like,

* Πιστις ουκ ἡ γεωμετρικαις αναγκαις, αλλ' ἡ ταις του πνευματος ενεργειαις εγγινομενη. BASIL in *Pſal.* 195.—The right faith is not that which is FORCED by mathematical demonſtration, whether we *will* or not; but that which grows in the mind from the operation or energies of the SPIRIT.

" without

" without any *divine aid*, except the *bare*
" *letter of the revelation*; and as this faith
" may riſe out of human abilities, ſo may
" it be attended with pride in our ſup-
" poſed accompliſhments, *envy* of others
" ſuperior ſkill, and bitter *ſtrife* againſt
" thoſe who miſtake or oppoſe ſuch
" truths; and is therefore no manifeſta-
" tion of that Spirit which reſiſteth the
" *proud*, and diſpenſes its graces only to
" the *humble*. THIS WISDOM DESCEND-
" ETH NOT FROM ABOVE. But *the true*
" *ſaving* faith, at the ſame time that it
" informs the underſtanding, influences
" the WILL AND AFFECTIONS; it en-
" lightens the eyes of the heart *, ſays the
" apoſtle: it is *there*, in the HEART, that
" the Chriſtian man believeth; and if
" *thou believeſt with thine* HEART, *thou*
" *ſhalt be ſaved* †; while infidelity pro-

* Πεφωτισμενους τους οφθαλμους τη καρδιας. *Epheſians*, i. 18.—Enlightening the eyes of the HEART. Almoſt all the old MSS. read καρδιας, and not διανοιας, as it ſtands in our printed copies.

See Mill's Lectiones Variantes. RIDLEY.

† Rom. x. 9.

" ceedeth

" ceedeth from an averſeneſs of our af-
" fections,—*from an evil heart of unbe-*
" *lief* *."

Is it not therefore ſtrange, that learned apologiſts, well acquainted with ſcripture, ſhould, after reading theſe ſtrong declarations, that the HEART muſt be impreſſed before faith can be fixed in it, ſhould ſtudiouſly avoid every topic which addreſſes itſelf to the *affections*, and coldly apply themſelves to the underſtanding, in a language and manner which might become a mathematical lecturer ſolving a problem of Euclid.

Infidelity is increaſing, and will continue to increaſe, ſo long as divines decline the means of converſion and perſuaſion which the ſcriptures of the New Teſtament declare to be the only *effectual* means; ſo long as they have recourſe to human reaſon and human learning ONLY, in which they will always find opponents very powerful. The Lord opened the heart of Lydia †, and then ſhe attended to

* Heb. iii. 12. † Acts, xvi. 14.

the

the things which were ſpoken of Paul. The Lord opens the HEARTS of all men at ſome period of their lives; but the vanity of the world, the cares of gain, the pride of life, *ſhut* them again, and reject the Holy Ghoſt. It is the buſineſs of divines to diſpoſe thoſe who are thus unfortunate and unwiſe, to be ready to receive the divine gueſt, ſhould he again knock at the door of their hearts; but in doing this, they muſt preach the true *goſpel*, which is not a ſyſtem of mere human morality or philoſophy, but the doctrine of grace *.

* It muſt be taught *mediatè per verbum*, IMMEDIATÈ *per* SPIRITUM.

SECTION V.

The true and only convincing Evidence of the Religion of Chriſt, or the Illumination of the Holy Ghoſt is offered to ALL.

FROM the eternal Fountain of light, both natural and ſpiritual, there ſtreams a light *which lighteth every one that cometh into the world.* Whoever loves that which is good and juſt and true, and deſires to act a virtuous part in his place allotted to him in this world, whether high or low, may be aſſured of the *bleſſing* of heaven, diſplaying itſelf not perhaps in worldly riches or honours, but in ſomething infinitely more valuable,—a SECRET INFLUENCE upon his heart and underſtanding, to direct his conduct, to improve his nature, and to lead him, though in the lowly vale, yet along the path of peace.

The

The nature of all men was depraved by the fall of Adam. The aſſiſtance of God's Holy Spirit was withdrawn. Chriſt came to reſtore that nature, and to bring down that aſſiſtance, and leave it as a GIFT, a legacy to all mankind after his departure.

In *Adam* ALL die, ſays St. Paul, but in Chriſt ſhall *all* be made alive. That is, in Adam *all* die a ſpiritual death, or loſe the *Paraclete*, the particle of the divine nature, which was beſtowed on man on his creation; and in Chriſt all are made alive, ſpiritually alive, or rendered capable, if they do not voluntarily chooſe darkneſs rather than light, of the divine illumination of the Holy Ghoſt. The *film* is taken from the eyes of all, but the eye-lids remain, which may be CLOSED by voluntary connivance, or by wicked preſumption.

" I will pour out my SPIRIT upon all " fleſh *."

" The grace which bringeth ſalvation " hath appeared unto ALL men."—" This

* Joel, ii. 28.

" is-

" is the light which lighteth *every man* " that cometh into the world."—" It is " his will, that all men ſhould be ſaved, " and come to the knowledge of the " truth."—" Chriſt came to ſave ſinners; " and we have before proved, both Jews " and Gentiles, that they are ALL under " ſin."—" Come unto me ALL ye that " labour and are heavy laden."—" He " has propitiated for the ſins of the WHOLE " world. His grace has been openly of- " fered to ALL men in the goſpel *."

Theſe paſſages, which no ſophiſtry can elude, are ſufficient to prove that the internal EVIDENCE of the goſpel has a great advantage over the external, in the circumſtance of its univerſality. All may be convinced by it who are willing †. But can this be ſaid of dry, logical, ſyſtematic teſtimonies, which require learning, ſaga-

* 1 Tim. ii. 4. 1 Tim. i. 15. Rom. iii. 9. Matth. ii. 28. 1 John, ii. 2. Tit. ii. 2.

† Η μεν γαρ χαρις εις ΠΑΝΤΑΣ εκκεχυται. CHRYSOSTOM *in Joan. Hom.—For grace indeed is poured out upon* ALL.

city,

city, and *time*, to be comprehended? Such teſtimonies are fit for *few*, and appear unlikely to produce vital religion in any. They ſerve men to *talk* about, they furniſh matter for logomachy; but they leave the heart unaffected. Neither Jeſus Chriſt nor his apoſtles thought proper to addreſs men *ſyſtematically*. And are critics, linguiſts, and logicians wiſer than the Author of their religion, and better informed than his apoſtles?

The word of God is like a *two-edged ſword*, invincible where it is properly uſed; but the word of man is comparatively a feeble weapon, without point or edge. The word of man alone, though adorned with all eloquence, learning, and logical ſubtilty, will never ſtop the progreſs of unbelief. The word of God, rightly explained, ſo as to adminiſter grace to the hearers and readers, will ſtill preſerve and extend Chriſtianity, as it has hitherto done, notwithſtanding all the oppoſition of the world, and thoſe unfeeling children of it,

whoſe hearts are hardened and underſtandings darkened by the pride of life. If, therefore, as St. James adviſes, any of you lack WISDOM, let him aſk of God, that *giveth* TO ALL men *liberally*, and upbraideth not, and it ſhall be given him. The wiſdom here meant is that which maketh *wiſe* unto ſalvation; and certainly is not to be found in the cold didactic writings of thoſe who rely entirely on their own reaſon, and deny or explain away the doctrine of grace.

Grace is the living goſpel. Periſhable paper, pens, ink, and printer's types, can never ſuperſede the daily, hourly operation of the omniſcient and omnipotent Creator and Preſerver of the univerſe.

Let us remember, "that to EVERY MAN "is given the manifeſtation of the Spirit "to profit withal." 1 Cor. xii. 7.

Mr. Payne, in his attack on Chriſtianity, ſums up all his objections at the cloſe. The firſt and greateſt is this, and I give it in his own words, though it is contrary to my practice, and opinion of propriety, often

to

to cite the cavils of unbelievers: "The idea "or belief of a word of God exiſting in "PRINT, or in WRITING, or in SPEECH, "is inconſiſtent with itſelf, for reaſons al- "ready aſſigned. Theſe reaſons, among "many others, are the want of an uni- "verſal language; the mutability of lan- "guage; the errors to which tranſlations "are ſubject; the poſſibility of totally "ſuppreſſing ſuch a word; the probabi- "lity of altering it, or of fabricating "the whole, and impoſing it upon the "world."

Now theſe objections cannot poſſibly be made to the *evidence* of the Spirit of God, the *manifeſtation of the Spirit given to every* man; becauſe the Spirit ſpeaks an *univerſal language*, addreſſing itſelf to the feelings of the heart, which are the ſame, whatever ſounds are uttered by the tongue; becauſe its language is not ſubject to the *mutability* of human dialects; becauſe it is far removed from the poſſibility of miſre- preſentation by tranſlators; becauſe it can- not be totally ſuppreſſed; becauſe it can-

not be altered; becauſe it cannot be *fabricated* or impoſed on the world; becauſe it is an EMANATION from the God of truth, the ſame yeſterday, to-day, and for ever. This evidence ſheds its light all over the Chriſtian world, and is ſeen, like the ſun in the heavens, by all who uſe their viſual powers, unobſtructed by ſelf-raiſed clouds of paſſion, prejudice, vice, and falſe philoſophy.

SECTION VI.

*Opinions of Biſhop Taylor reſpecting the Evidence of the Holy Spirit; "ſhewing" (as he expreſſes it) "how the Scholars "of the Univerſity ſhall become moſt "*LEARNED *and moſt* USEFUL."

"WE have examined all ways, in our "inquiries after religious truth, but "one; all but GOD'S WAY *. Let us, hav- "ing miſſed in all the other, try this. "Let us go to God for truth; for truth "comes from God only. If we miſs the "truth, it is becauſe we will not find it; "for certain it is, that all the truth which "God hath made NECESSARY, he hath "alſo made legible and plain; and if we "will open our eyes we ſhall ſee the ſun, "and if *we will walk in the light, we ſhall "rejoice in the light.* Only let us with- "draw the curtains, let us remove the "impediments, and the ſin that doth ſo

* See Biſhop Taylor's VIA *Intelligentiæ.*

" eaſily beſet us. That is GOD'S WAY. " Every man muſt, in his ſtation, do that " portion of duty which God requires of " him; and then he ſhall BE TAUGHT OF " GOD all that is fit for him to learn; " there *is no other way for him but this.* " The fear of the Lord is the beginning " of wiſdom; and a good underſtanding " have all they that do thereafter. And " ſo ſaid David of himſelf: *I have more* " *underſtanding than my teachers; becauſe* " *I keep thy commandments.* And this is " the only way which Chriſt has taught " us. If you aſk, what is truth? you muſt " not do as Pilate did, aſk the queſtion, " and then go away from him that only can " give you an anſwer; for as God is the " Author of truth, ſo he is the TEACHER " of it, and the way to learn is this; for " ſo ſaith our bleſſed Lord; If any man " will do his will, he *ſhall know of the* " *doctrine whether it be of God or no.*

" This text is ſimple as truth itſelf, but " greatly comprehenſive, and contains a " truth that alone will enable you to un-

" derſtand

" derſtand all myſteries, and to expound
" all prophecies, and to interpret all
" ſcriptures, and to ſearch into all ſecrets,
" all, I mean, which concern our happi-
" neſs and our duty. It is plainly to be
" reſolved into this propoſition:

" THE WAY TO JUDGE OF RELIGION
" IS BY DOING OUR DUTY; AND THEO-
" LOGY IS RATHER A DIVINE LIFE THAN
" A DIVINE KNOWLEDGE.

" In heaven indeed we ſhall firſt ſee
" and then love; but here on earth we
" muſt firſt love, and love will open our
" eyes as well as our hearts, and we ſhall
" then ſee and perceive and underſtand.

" Every man underſtands more of re-
" ligion by his affections than by his rea-
" ſon. It is not the wit of the man, but
" the ſpirit of the man; not ſo much his
" head as his heart that learns the DIVINE
" PHILOSOPHY.

" There is in every righteous man a
" NEW VITAL PRINCIPLE. The ſpirit of
" grace is the ſpirit of wiſdom, and teaches
" us by ſecret inſpirations, by proper ar-

" guments, by actual perſuaſions, by per-
" ſonal applications, by effects and ener-
" gies; and as the ſoul of man is the cauſe
" of all his vital operations, ſo is the Spi-
" rit of God the life of that life, and the
" cauſe of all actions and productions
" ſpiritual; and the conſequence of this
" is what St. John tells us of; *Ye have*
" *received the* UNCTION *from above, and*
" *that anointing teacheth you all things*,—
" all things of ſome one kind; that is,
" certainly all things that pertain to life
" and godlineſs; all that by which a man
" is *wiſe and happy*. Unleſs the ſoul have
" a new life put into it, unleſs there be a
" vital principle within, unleſs the Spirit
" of life be the informer of the ſpirit of
" the man, the word of God will be as
" DEAD in the operation as the body in
" its powers and poſſibilities.

" God's Spirit does not deſtroy reaſon,
" but heightens it. God opens the heart
" and creates a new one, and without this
" creation, this new principle of life, we
" may hear the word of God, but we can

" *never*

" *never underſtand it*; we hear the ſound,
" but are never the better. Unleſs there
" be in our hearts a ſecret conviction by
" the Spirit of God, the GOSPEL ITSELF
" IS A DEAD LETTER.

" Do we not ſee this by daily expe-
" rience? Even thoſe things which a
" good man and an evil man KNOW, they
" do not know both alike. An evil man
" *knows* that God is lovely, and that ſin is
" of an evil and deſtructive nature, and
" when he is reproved he is *convinced*;
" and when he is obſerved, he is aſhamed;
" and when he has done, he is unſatisfied;
" and when he purſues his ſin, he does it
" in the dark. Tell him he ſhall die, and
" he ſighs deeply, but he *knows* it as well
" as you. Proceed, and ſay that after
" death comes judgment, and the poor
" man believes and trembles; and yet,
" after all this, he runs to commit his ſin
" with as certain an event and reſolution as
" if he *knew* no *argument* againſt it.

" Now ſince, at the ſame time, we ſee
" *other* perſons, not ſo LEARNED, it may

" be, not ſo much verſed in the *ſcriptures*,
" yet they ſay a thing is good and lay hold
" of it. They believe glorious things of
" heaven, and they live accordingly, as
" men that believe themſelves. What is
" the reaſon of this *difference?* They
" both read the ſcriptures; they read and
" hear the ſame ſermons; they have ca-
" pable underſtandings; they both believe
" what they hear and what they read; and
" yet the *event is vaſtly different.* The
" reaſon is that which I am now ſpeak-
" ing of: the one underſtands by one
" principle, the other by another; the
" one underſtands by NATURE, the other
" by GRACE; the one by human learn-
" ing, the other by DIVINE; the one
" reads the ſcriptures without, and the
" other within; the one underſtands as a
" ſon of man, the other as a ſon of God;
" the one perceives by the proportions of
" the world, the other by the meaſures of
" the Spirit; the one underſtands by REA-
" SON, the other by LOVE; and therefore
" he does not only underſtand the ſer-
" mons

" mons of the Spirit and perceive their " MEANING, but he pierces deeper, and " knows the meaning of that meaning; " that is, the SECRET OF THE SPIRIT, that " which is ſpiritually diſcerned, that which " gives life to the propoſition and activity " to the ſoul. And the reaſon is, that he " hath a divine principle within him and a " new underſtanding; that is plainly, he " hath LOVE, and that is more than KNOW- " LEDGE, as was rarely well obſerved by " St. Paul. Knowledge puffeth up; but " charity * edifieth; that is, charity mak- " eth the beſt ſcholars. No ſermons can " build you up a holy building to God, " unleſs the love of God be in your hearts, " and purify your ſouls from all filthineſs " of the fleſh and ſpirit.

" A good life is the beſt way to under- " ſtand wiſdom and religion, becauſe, by " the *experiences* and reliſhes of religion, " there is conveyed to them a ſweetneſs to " which all wicked men are ſtrangers. " There is in the things of God, to thoſe

* Αγαπη—Love of God.

" who practiſe them, a delicioufneſs that
" makes us love them, and that love ad-
" mits us into God's cabinet, and *ſtrangely*
" *clarifies the underſtanding by the purifi-*
" *cation of the heart.* For when our rea-
" ſon is raiſed up by the Spirit of Chriſt,
" it is turned quickly into EXPERIENCE;
" when our faith relies upon the principles
" of Chriſt, it is changed into *viſion*; and
" ſo long as we know God only in the
" ways of men, by *contentious* learning,
" by ARGUING and diſpute, we ſee no-
" thing but the ſhadow of him, and in
" that ſhadow we meet with many dark
" appearances, little certainty, and much
" conjecture; but when we know him
" λογω αποφαντικω, γαληνῃ νοερᾷ, with the
" eyes of holineſs and the inſtruction of
" *gracious* experiences, with a quiet ſpirit
" and the peace of enjoyment, *then* we
" ſhall hear what we never heard, and ſee
" what our eyes never ſaw; *then* the my-
" ſteries of Godlineſs ſhall be open unto
" us, and clear as the windows of the
" morning; and this is rarely well ex-
" preſſed by the apoſtle. " If we ſtand up

" from

" from the dead and awake from ſleep,
" then Chriſt ſhall give us LIGHT."

" For though the ſcriptures themſelves
" are written by the Spirit of God, yet
" they are written within and without;
" and beſides the light that ſhines upon
" the face of them, *unleſs there be a light*
" *ſhining within our hearts*, unfolding the
" leaves, and interpreting the myſterious
" ſenſe of the Spirit, convincing our con-
" ſciences and preaching to our hearts; to
" look for Chriſt in the leaves of the goſ-
" pel, is to look for the living among the
" dead. There is a life in them; but that
" life is, according to St. Paul's expreſ-
" ſion, hid with Chriſt in God, and un-
" leſs the Spirit of God draw it forth, *we*
" ſhall not be able.

" Human learning brings excellent mi-
" niſteries towards this; it is admirably uſe-
" ful for the reproof of hereſies, for the
" detection of fallacies, for the letter of
" the ſcriptures, for *collateral teſtimonies*,
" for exterior advantages; but there is
" ſomething beyond this, that human

" learn-

" learning without the addition of *divine*
" can never reach.

" A good man, though unlearned in
" *ſecular* knowledge, is like the windows
" of the temple, narrow without and
" broad within; he ſees not ſo much of
" what profits not *abroad*, but whatſoever
" is *within*, and concerns religion and the
" glorifications of God, that he ſees with
" a broad inſpection; but all human learn-
" ing without God is but blindneſs and
" folly. One man diſcourſes of the ſa-
" crament, another *receives* Chriſt; one
" diſcourſes for or againſt tranſubſtantia-
" tion; but the good man feels himſelf
" to be changed, and ſo joined to Chriſt,
" that he only underſtands the true ſenſe
" of tranſubſtantiation, while he becomes
" to Chriſt bone of his bone, fleſh of his
" fleſh, and of the ſame ſpirit with his
" Lord.

" From holineſs we have the beſt in-
" ſtruction. For that which we are taught
" by the Holy Spirit of God, this new
" nature, this vital principle within us,

" it is that which is worth our learning:
" not vain and empty, idle and insignifi-
" cant notions, in which, when you have
" laboured till your eyes are fixed in their
" orbs, and your flesh unfixed from its
" bones, you are *no better and no wiser*.
" If the Spirit of God be your teacher, he
" will teach you such truths as will make
" you know and love God, and become
" like to him, and enjoy him for ever, by
" passing from *similitude to union* and eter-
" nal fruition.

" Too many scholars have lived upon
" air and empty notions for many ages
" past, and troubled themselves with ty-
" ing and untying knots, like hypochon-
" driacs in a fit of melancholy, thinking
" of nothings, and troubling themselves
" with nothings, and falling out about no-
" things, and being very wise and very
" learned in things that are not, and work
" not, and were never planted in Paradise by
" the finger of God. If the Spirit of God
" be our teacher, we shall learn to avoid evil
" and to do good, to be wise and to be

" holy,

" holy, to be profitable and careful; and
" they that walk in this way ſhall find
" more peace in their conſciences, MORE
" SKILL IN THE SCRIPTURES, more ſatis-
" faction in their doubts, than can be ob-
" tained by all the polemical and imper-
" tinent diſputations of the world. The
" man that is wiſe, he that is conducted
" by the Spirit of God, knows better in
" what Chriſt's kingdom doth conſiſt than
" to throw away his time and intereſt, his
" peace and ſafety, for what? for reli-
" gion? no: for the body of religion?
" not ſo much: for the garment of the
" body of religion? no, not for ſo much;
" but for the *fringes* of the garment of
" the body of religion; for ſuch, and no
" better, are many religious diſputes;
" things, or rather circumſtances and
" manners of things, in which the ſoul
" and ſpirit are not at all concerned. The
" *knowledge* which comes from godlineſs
" is θειοτερον τι πασης αποδειξεως, ſomething
" more certain and divine than all demon-
" ſtration and human learning.

" And

" And now to conclude:—to you I
" ſpeak, fathers and brethren, you who
" are or intend to be of the clergy; you
" ſee here the beſt compendium of your
" ſtudies, the beſt alleviation of your la-
" bours, the trueſt method of wiſdom.
" It is not by reading multitudes of books,
" but by ſtudying the truth of God; it is
" not by laborious commentaries of the
" doctors that you can finiſh your work,
" but the expoſition of the Spirit of God;
" it is not by the rules of metaphyſics,
" but by the proportions of holineſs; and
" when all books are read, and all argu-
" ments examined, and all authorities al-
" leged, nothing can be found to be true
" that is unholy. The learning of the fa-
" thers was more owing to their piety
" than their ſkill, more to God than to
" themſelves. Theſe were the men that
" prevailed againſt error, becauſe they
" lived according to truth. If ye walk in
" light, and live in the ſpirit, your doc-
" trines will be true, and that truth will
" prevail.

" I pray

" I pray God to give you all grace to " follow this wiſdom, to ſtudy this learn- " ing, to labour for the underſtanding of " godlineſs; ſo your time and your ſtu- " dies, your perſons and your labours, " will be holy and uſeful, ſanctified and " bleſſed, beneficial to men and pleaſing " to God, through him who is the wiſ- " dom of the Father, who is made to all " that love him, wiſdom, and righteouſ- " neſs, and ſanctification, and redemp- " tion."

Will any one among our living theologiſts controvert the merits of Biſhop Taylor? Is there one whom the public judgment will place on an equality with him? Will any one ſtigmatize him as an ignorant enthuſiaſt? His ſtrength of underſtanding and powers of reaſoning are ſtrikingly exhibited in his *Ductor dubitantium*, in his *Liberty of propheſying*, and in his polemical writings. I muſt conclude, that he underſtood the Chriſtian religion better than moſt of the ſons of men; becauſe, to abilities of the very firſt rank, he united in himſelf

himſelf the fineſt feelings of devotion. His authority muſt have weight with all ſerious and humble inquirers into the ſubject of Chriſtianity, and his authority ſtrongly and repeatedly inculcates the opinion which I wiſh to maintain, that the beſt evidence of the truth of our religion is derived from the operation of the Holy Spirit on every heart which is diſpoſed to receive it.

And I wiſh it to be duly attended to, that the diſcourſe from which the above extracts are made, was not addreſſed to a popular aſſembly, but to the clergy of an univerſity, and at a ſolemn viſitation. The Biſhop evidently wiſhed that the doctrines which he taught might be diſſeminated among the people by the parochial clergy. They were diſſeminated; and in conſequence of it, Chriſtianity flouriſhed. They muſt be again diſſeminated by the Biſhops and all parochial clergy, if they ſincerely wiſh to check the progreſs of infidelity. The minds of men muſt be impreſſed with the ſenſe of an influential DIVINITY in the Chriſtian religion, or they will reject it for the morality

rality of Socrates, Seneca, the modern philoſophers, and all thoſe plauſible reaſoners, to whom this world and the *things which are ſeen* are the chief objects of attention. The *old divines* taught and preached with wonderful efficacy, becauſe they ſpoke as men having authority from the Holy Ghoſt, and not as the diſputers of this world, proud of a little ſcience, acquired from *heathen* writers in the cloiſters of an academy. There was a celeſtial glory diffuſed round the pulpits of the old divines; and the hearers, ſtruck with veneration, liſtened to the preacher as to an undoubted oracle. Full of *grace* were his lips; and *moral* TRUTH was beautifully illuminated by *divine*. She eaſily won and firmly fixed the affections of men, clothed, as ſhe was, with light as with a garment.

SECTION VII.

Paſſages from the celebrated Mr. John Smith, *Fellow of Queen's College, Cambridge, corroborative of the Opinion that the beſt Evidence of the Chriſtian Religion ariſes from the Energy of the Holy Spirit* *.

" DIVINE truth is not to be diſcerned " ſo much in a man's brain as in his " heart. There is a divine and ſpiritual " ſenſe which alone is able to converſe in- " ternally with the life and ſoul of divine " truth, as mixing and uniting itſelf with " it; while vulgar minds behold only the " body and outſide of it. Though in it- " ſelf it be moſt intelligible, and ſuch as " the human mind may moſt eaſily appre- " hend, yet there is an INCRUSTATION, " as the Hebrew † writers call it, upon " all corrupt minds, which hinders the " lively taſte and reliſh of it.

* See his Select Diſcourſes.

† *Incruſtamentum immunditiei*—An incruſtation of filth.

" The

" The beſt acquaintance with religion " is a KNOWLEDGE TAUGHT OF GOD *: it " is a light which deſcends from heaven, " which alone is able to guide and con- " duct the ſouls of men to that heaven " whence it comes. The Chriſtian reli- " gion is an influx from God upon the " minds of good men; and the great de- " ſign of the goſpel is to unite human na- " ture to divinity.

" The goſpel is a mighty efflux and " emanation of life and ſpirit, freely iſſuing " forth from an omnipotent ſource of " grace and love; that godlike, vital " influence, by which the Divinity derives " itſelf into the ſouls of men, enlivening " and transforming them into its own " likeneſs, and ſtrongly imprinting upon " them a copy of its own beauty and " goodneſs: like the ſpiritual virtue of " the heavens, which ſpreads itſelf freely " upon the lower world, and ſubtilely " inſinuating itſelf into this benumbed,

* Θεοδίδακτος γνωσις.

" feeble,

" feeble, earthly matter, begets life and " motion in it; briefly, it is that whereby " God comes to dwell in us, and we in " him.

" The apoſtle calls the law the mini- " ſtration of the letter and of death, it be- " ing in itſelf but a dead letter, as all that " which is without a man's ſoul muſt be; " but on the other ſide, he calls the goſ- " pel, becauſe of the intrinſical and vital " adminiſtration of it in living impreſ- " ſions upon the ſouls of men, the *mini-* " *ſtration of the ſpirit*, and the *miniſtra-* " *tion of righteouſneſs*; by which he cannot " mean the HISTORY of the goſpel, or " thoſe CREDENDA propounded to us to " believe; for this would make the goſpel " itſelf as much an external thing as the " law was; and ſo we ſee that the preach- " ing of Chriſt crucified was to the Jews " a *ſtumbling-block, and to the Greeks fool-* " *iſhneſs*. But indeed he means a VITAL " EFFLUX from God upon the ſouls of " men, whereby they are made partakers " of life and ſtrength from him.

" Though

" Though the *hiſtory* and outward com-
" munication of the goſpel to us *in ſcriptis*
" is to be always acknowledged as a ſpe-
" cial mercy and advantage, and certainly
" no leſs privilege to the Chriſtians than it
" was to the Jews, to be the depoſitaries
" of the oracles of God, yet it is plain that
" the apoſtle, where he compares the law
" and the goſpel, means ſomething which
" is more than a piece of book-learning,
" or an hiſtorical narration of the free
" love of God, in the ſeveral contrivances
" of it for the redemption of mankind.

" The evangelical or new law is an
" efflux of life and power from God him-
" ſelf, the original of life and power, and
" produceth life wherever it comes;
" and to this double diſpenſation of law
" and goſpel does St. Paul clearly refer
" 2 Cor. iii. 3. You are the epiſtle of
" Chriſt miniſtered by us, WRITTEN NOT
" WITH INK, but with THE SPIRIT OF
" THE LIVING GOD.—*Not in tables of*
" *ſtone*; which laſt words are a plain gloſs
" upon that mundane kind of adminiſter-

" ing the law, in a mere external way, to " which he oppoſeth the GOSPEL.

" The goſpel is not ſo much a *ſyſtem* " and body of ſaving divinity, as the " ſpirit and vital influence of it ſpreading " itſelf over all the powers of men's ſouls, " and quickening them into a DIVINE " LIFE; it is not ſo properly a doctrine " that is wrapt up in ink and paper, as it is " VITALIS SCIENTIA, a living impreſſion " made upon the ſoul and ſpirit. The " goſpel does not ſo much conſiſt *in ver-* " *bis* as *in virtute*;—in the written word, " as in an internal energy."

He who wiſhes to have an adequate idea of this profound ſcholar and moſt excellent man, will find a pleaſing account of him in Biſhop Patrick's ſermon at his funeral, ſubjoined to the SELECT DISCOURSES, which abound with beautiful paſſages, illuſtrative of the true Chriſtian philoſophy.

SECTION VIII.

Dr. Iſaac Barrow's *Opinion of the Evidence of Chriſtianity, afforded by the illuminating Operation of the Holy Spirit; and on the Holy Spirit in general.*

"OUR reaſon is ſhut up, and barred "with various appetites, humours, "and paſſions againſt goſpel truths; nor "can we admit them into our hearts, ex- "cept God, by his ſpirit, do *ſet open our* "*mind*, and work a free paſſage for them "into us. It is he who commanded the "light to ſhine out of darkneſs, that "muſt, as St. Paul ſpeaketh, *illuſtrate* "*our hearts with the knowledge of theſe* "*things*. An UNCTION from the Holy "one, clearing our eyes, ſoftening our "hearts, healing our diſtempered fa- "culties, muſt, as St. John informeth "us, TEACH and perſuade us this ſort "of truths. A hearty belief of theſe

"ſeemingly

" ſeemingly incredible propoſitions muſt
" indeed be, as St. Paul calleth it, the
" GIFT of God, proceeding from that
" Spirit of faith whereof the ſame apoſtle
" ſpeaketh; ſuch faith is not, as St. Baſil
" faith, engendered by geometrical *neceſ-*
" *ſities*, but by the effectual operations of
" the Holy Ghoſt. Fleſh and blood will
" not reveal to us, nor can any man with
" clear confidence ſay that Jeſus is the
" Lord (the MESSIAS, the infallible Pro-
" phet, the univerſal Lawgiver, the Son
" of the living God) but by the *Holy*
" *Ghoſt*. Every ſpirit which *ſincerely* con-
" feſſeth him to be the Chriſt, we may,
" with St. John, ſafely conclude to be of
" God; for of ourſelves we are not ſuffi-
" cient, as the apoſtle ſays, λογιζεσθαι τι,
" to reaſon out or collect any of theſe
" things. We NEVER, of our own ac-
" cord, without DIVINE ATTRACTION,
" *ſhould come unto Chriſt*; that is, ſhould
" effectually conſent unto and embrace his
" inſtitution, conſiſting of ſuch *unplauſible*
" propoſitions and precepts. Hardly

" would his own diſciples, who had ſo
" long enjoyed the light of his converſa-
" tion and inſtruction, admitted it, if he
" had not granted them that *Spirit of*
" *truth*, whoſe work it was οδηγειν, to
" lead them in this unknown and uncouth
" way; αναγγελλειν to tell them again and
" again, that is, to inſtill and inculcate
" theſe crabbed truths upon them; υπο-
" μιμνησκειν, to admoniſh, excite, and
" urge them to the marking and minding
" them: hardly, I ſay, without the guid-
" ance of this Spirit, would our Lord's
" diſciples have admitted divers *evange-*
" *lical* truths, as our Lord himſelf told
" them. I have, ſaid he, many things be-
" ſide to ſay to you, but ye cannot as yet
" bear them; but when he, the Spirit of
" truth, ſhall come, he ſhall CONDUCT
" YOU INTO ALL TRUTH.

" As for the mighty ſages of the world,
" the learned ſcribes, the ſubtle diſputers,
" the deep politicians, the wiſe men ac-
" cording to the fleſh, the men of moſt
" refined judgment and *improved* REASON

" in

" in the world's eye, they were more
" ready to deride than to regard, to im-
" pugn than to admit theſe doctrines; to
" the Greeks, who ſought wiſdom, the
" preaching of them ſeemed fooliſhneſs.

" It is true, ſome few ſparks or flaſhes
" of this divine knowledge may poſſibly
" be driven out by *rational* conſideration.
" Philoſophy may yield ſome twilight
" glimmerings thereof. Common reaſon
" may dictate a faint conſent unto, may
" produce a *cold tendency* after ſome of
" theſe things; but a *clear perception*, and
" a reſolute perſuaſion of mind, that full
" aſſurance of faith and inflexible confeſ-
" ſion of hope ομολογια της ελπιδος ακλινης,
" which the apoſtle to the Hebrews
" ſpeaks of, that full aſſurance of un-
" derſtanding, that abundant knowledge
" of the divine will in all ſpiritual wiſdom
" and underſtanding, with which St. Paul
" did pray that his Coloſſians might be
" repleniſhed; theſe ſo perfect illuſtra-
" tions of the mind, ſo powerful convic-
" tions of the heart, do argue *immediate*

" *influences* from the Fountain of life and
" wiſdom, the DIVINE SPIRIT. No ex-
" ternal inſtruction could infuſe, no in-
" terior diſcourſe could excite them;
" could penetrate theſe opacities of ig-
" norance, and diſſipate theſe thick miſts
" of prejudice, wherein nature and cuſtom
" do involve us; could ſo thoroughly
" awaken the lethargic ſtupidity of our
" ſouls; could ſupple the refractory ſtiff-
" neſs of our wills; could mollify the
" ſtony hardneſs of our hearts; could
" void our natural averſation to ſuch
" things, and quell that φρονημα σαρκος,
" that carnal mind, which, St. Paul ſays,
" is enmity againſt God, for it is not ſub-
" ject to the law of God, neither indeed
" can be; could depreſs thoſe υψωματα,
" thoſe lofty towers of ſelf-conceit, reared
" againſt the knowledge of God, and
" demoliſh thoſe οχυρωματα, thoſe bul-
" warks of ſelf-will and perverſe ſtomach
" oppoſed againſt the impreſſions of di-
" vine faith, and captivate παν νοημα,
" every conceit and device of ours to the
" obedience

" obedience of Chriſt and his diſcipline.
" Well, therefore, did St. Paul pray in
" behalf of his Epheſians, that God would
" beſtow on them the Spirit of wiſdom
" and revelation in the acknowledgment
" of him, and that the eyes of their mind
" might be enlightened, ſo as to know the
" hope of their calling; that is, to under-
" ſtand and believe the doctrines of
" Chriſtianity.****

" We proceed now to the peculiar of-
" fices, functions, and operations of the
" Holy Spirit: Many ſuch there are in
" an eſpecial manner attributed or appro-
" priated to him; which, as they reſpect
" God, ſeem reducible to two general
" ones: the declaration of God's mind,
" and the execution of his will; as they
" are referred to man, (for in regard to
" other beings, the ſcripture doth not ſo
" much conſider what he performs, it not
" concerning us to know it,) are eſpe-
" cially the producing in us all actions
" requiſite or conducible to our eternal
" happineſs and ſalvation; to which may

" be added, the interceſſion between God " and man, which jointly reſpecteth " both.

" Firſt, it is his eſpecial work to diſ- " cloſe God's mind to us; whence he is " ſtyled the *Spirit of truth*, *the Spirit of* " *prophecy*, *the Spirit of revelation*; for " that all ſupernatural light and wiſdom " have ever proceeded from him. He " inſtructed *all the prophets that have been* " *ſince the world began*, *to* know, he ena- " bled them to *ſpeak*, the mind of God " concerning things preſent and future. " Holy men (that have taught men their " duty, and lead them in the way to bliſs) " were but his inſtruments, *ſpeaking as* " *they were moved by the Holy Ghoſt*.

" By his inſpiration the holy ſcriptures " (the moſt full and certain witneſs of " God's mind, the law and teſtimony by " which our life is to be directed and re- " gulated) were conceived. *He guided* " *the apoſtles into all truth*, and by them " inſtructed the world in the knowledge " of God's gracious intentions towards " mankind,

" mankind, and in all the holy myſteries
" of the goſpel: *That which in other ages*
" *was not made known unto the ſons of*
" *men, as it is now revealed unto his holy*
" *apoſtles and prophets by the Spirit. Eye*
" *hath not ſeen, nor ear heard, neither*
" *have entered into the heart of man, the*
" *things which God hath prepared for*
" *them that love him; but God hath re-*
" *vealed them to us by his Spirit,* ſaith
" St. Paul. *All the* KNOWLEDGE we can
" pretend to in theſe things doth proceed
" *merely* from his *revelation*, doth wholly
" rely upon his authority.

" To him it eſpecially belongs to exe-
" cute the will of God, in matters tran-
" ſcending the ordinary power and courſe
" of nature. Whence he is called the
" *power of the Moſt High*, (that is, the
" ſubſtantial power and virtue of God,)
" the *finger of God* (as by comparing the
" expreſſion of St. Luke and St. Matthew
" may appear); and whatever eminent
" God hath deſigned, he is ſaid to have
" performed by him; by him he framed

" the world, and (as Job ſpeaketh) *gar-*
" *niſhed the heavens.* By him he govern-
" eth the world, ſo that all extraordinary
" works of Providence, (when God, be-
" ſide the common law and uſual courſe of
" nature, doth interpoſe to do any thing,)
" all miraculous performances are attri-
" buted to his energy. By him our Sa-
" viour, by him the apoſtles, by him the
" prophets, are expreſsly ſaid to perform
" their wonderful works; but eſpecially
" by him God manages that great work,
" ſo earneſtly deſigned by him, of our ſal-
" vation; working in us all good diſpoſi-
" tions, capacifying us for ſalvation, di-
" recting and aſſiſting us in all our actions
" tending thereto.

" We naturally are void of thoſe good
" diſpoſitions in underſtanding, will, and
" affections which are needful to render
" us acceptable unto God, fit to ſerve
" and pleaſe him, capable of any favour
" from him, of any true happineſs in our-
" ſelves. Our minds naturally are blind,
" ignorant, ſtupid, giddy, and prone to
" error,

" error, eſpecially in things ſupernatural
" and ſpiritual, and abſtracted from or-
" dinary ſenſe. Our wills are froward and
" ſtubborn, light and unſtable, inclining
" to evil, and averſe from what is truly
" good; our affections are very irregular,
" diſorderly, and unſettled; to remove
" which bad diſpoſitions, (inconſiſtent with
" God's friendſhip and favour, driving
" us into ſin and miſery,) and to beget
" thoſe contrary to them, the KNOWLEDGE
" and belief of divine truth, a love of
" goodneſs and delight therein; a well
" compoſed, orderly, and ſteady frame or
" ſpirit, God in mercy doth grant to us
" the virtue of his Holy Spirit; who firſt
" *opening our hearts*, ſo as to let in and
" apprehend the light of divine truth,
" then, by repreſentation of proper argu-
" ments, perſuading our reaſon to em-
" brace it, begetteth divine knowledge,
" wiſdom, and faith in our minds, which
" is the work of illumination and inſtruc-
" tion, the firſt part of his office reſpect-
" ing our ſalvation.

" Then by continual impreſſions he " bendeth our inclinations, and mollifieth " our hearts, and tempereth our affec- " tions to a willing compliance with God's " will, and a hearty complacence in that " which is good and pleaſing to God; ſo " breeding all pious and virtuous inclina- " tions in us, reverence towards God, " charity to men, ſobriety and purity as " to ourſelves, with the reſt of thoſe " amiable and heavenly virtues of ſoul, " which is the work of ſanctification, ano- " ther great part of his office.

" Both theſe operations together (en- " lightening our minds, ſanctifying our " wills and affections) do conſtitute and " accompliſh that work, which is ſtyled " the regeneration, renovation, vivifica- " tion, new creation, reſurrection of a " man; the faculties of our ſouls being ſo " improved, that we become, as it were, " other men thereby; able and apt to do " that for which before we were altoge- " ther indiſpoſed and unfit.

" He

" He alſo directeth and governeth our
" actions, continually leading and moving
" us in the ways of obedience to God's
" holy will and law. As we live by him,
" (having a new ſpiritual life implanted in
" us,) ſo we *walk by him*, are continually
" led and acted by his conduct and help.
" He reclaimeth us from error and ſin;
" he ſupporteth and ſtrengtheneth us in
" temptation; he adviſeth and admoniſh-
" eth, exciteth and encourageth us to all
" works of piety and virtue.

" Particularly he guideth and quicken-
" eth us in devotion, ſhewing us what we
" ſhould aſk, raiſing in us holy deſires and
" comfortable hopes, diſpoſing us to ap-
" proach unto God with firm diſpoſitions
" of mind, love, and reverence, and hum-
" ble confidence.

" It is alſo a notable part of the Holy
" Spirit's office to comfort and ſuſtain us
" in all our religious practice, ſo parti-
" cularly in our doubts, difficulties, diſ-
" treſſes, and afflictions; to beget joy,
" peace, and ſatisfaction in us, in all our

" perform-

" performances, and in all our ſufferings,
" whence the title of Comforter belongeth
" to him.

" It is alſo another part thereof to aſſure
" us of God's gracious love and favour,
" and that we are his children; confirm-
" ing in us the hopes of our everlaſting
" inheritance. We feeling ourſelves to
" live ſpiritually by him, to love God
" and goodneſs, to thirſt after righteouſ-
" neſs, and to delight in pleaſing God,
" are thereby raiſed to hope God loves
" and favours us; and that he having, by
" ſo authentic a ſeal, ratified his word and
" promiſe, having already beſtowed ſo
" ſure a pledge, ſo precious an earneſt,
" ſo plentiful firſt-fruits, will not fail to
" make good the remainder deſigned and
" promiſed us, of everlaſting joy and
" bliſs."

Let no man be afraid or aſhamed of maintaining opinions on the *divine energy*, which are thus ſupported by the firſt of ſcholars and philoſophers, ISAAC BARROW.

SECTION IX.

Biſhop Bull's *Opinion on the Evidence of the Spirit of God on the Mind of Man, and its Union with it; the Loſs of that Spirit by Adam's Fall, and the Recovery of it by Chriſt.*

" THE ſecond way," ſays Biſhop Bull, " by which the Spirit of God wit-
" neſſeth with our ſpirit, that we are the
" ſons of God, is by enlightening our un-
" derſtandings and ſtrengthening the eyes
" of our minds, as occaſion requires, to
" diſcern thoſe gracious fruits and effects
" which God hath wrought in us.

" The Spirit of God, which in the firſt
" beginning of things moved upon the
" face of the great deep, and invigorated
" the chaos, or dark and confuſed heap
" of things, and cauſed light to ſhine out
" of that darkneſs, can, with the greateſt
" eaſe, when he pleaſes, cauſe the light

" of

" of divine conſolation to ariſe and ſhine
" upon the dark and diſconſolate ſoul.
" And this he often doth. I may here
" appeal to the EXPERIENCE of many
" good Chriſtians, who ſometimes find a
" ſudden joy coming into their minds,
" ENLIGHTENING their UNDERSTAND-
" INGS, diſpelling all clouds from thence,
" warming and enlivening their affections,
" and enabling them to diſcern the graces
" of God ſhining in their brightneſs, and
" to FEEL them vigorouſly acting in their
" ſouls, ſo that they have been, after a ſort,
" TRANSFIGURED with their Saviour, and
" wiſhed, with St. Peter, that they might
" always dwell on that mount Tabor.****

" Man may be conſidered in a double
" relation; firſt in relation to the *natural*,
" *animal*, and *earthly* life; and ſo he is a
" perfect man, that hath only a *reaſonable*
" ſoul and body adapted to it; for the
" powers and faculties of theſe are ſuffi-
" cient to the exerciſe of the functions and
" operations belonging to ſuch a life. But
" ſecondly, man may be conſidered in
" order

" order to a *ſupernatural* end, and as de-
" ſigned to a ſpiritual and celeſtial life;
" and of this life the SPIRIT OF GOD is
" the principle. For man's natural powers
" and faculties, even as they were before
" the fall, ENTIRE, were not ſufficient or
" able of themſelves to reach ſuch a *ſu-*
" *pernatural* end, but needed the power of
" the DIVINE SPIRIT to ſtrengthen, ele-
" vate, and raiſe them. He that denies
" this, oppoſes himſelf againſt the ſtream
" and current of the holy ſcriptures, and
" the conſent of the Catholic church.
" Therefore to the perfect conſtitution of
" man, conſidered in this relation, a rea-
" ſonable ſoul and a body adapted there-
" unto are not ſufficient; but there is
" neceſſarily required an union of the
" DIVINE SPIRIT with both, as it were a
" THIRD ESSENTIAL PRINCIPLE. This,
" as it is a certain truth, ſo it is a great
" MYSTERY OF CHRISTIANITY.****

" The great Baſil, in his homily in-
" titled, *Quod Deus non eſt Author pec-*
" *cati*, ſpeaking of the nature of man, as

" it

" it was at firſt created, hath theſe words:
" * *What was the chief or principal good it*
" *enjoyed?* THE ASSESSION OF GOD AND
" ITS CONJUNCTION WITH HIM BY LOVE;
" *from which, when it fell, it became de-*
" *praved with various and manifold evils.*
" So in his book, *de Spiritu Sancto, cap.*
" 15, he plainly tells us, † *The diſpenſa-*
" *tion of God and our Saviour towards*
" *man, is but the recalling of him from*
" *the fall, and his return into the friend-*
" *ſhip of that God, from that alienation*
" *which ſin had cauſed. This was the end*
" *of Chriſt's coming in the fleſh, of his life*

* " Τὶ δὲ ἦν αὐτῇ τὸ προηγούμενον ἀγαθὸν; ἡ προσε-
" δρεία του θεοῦ, καὶ ἡ διὰ τῆς ἀγάπης συνάφεια· ἧς ἐκ-
" πεσοῦσα, τοῖς ποικίλοις καὶ πολυτρόποις ἀρρώστημασιν
" ἐκακώθη."

† " Ἡ του θεοῦ καὶ σωτῆρος ἡμων περὶ τὸν ἄνθρωπον
" οἰκονομία, ἀνάκλησίς ἐστιν ἀπὸ τῆς ἐκπτώσεως, καὶ ἐπά-
" νοδος εἰς οἰκείωσιν θεοῦ, ἀπὸ τῆς διὰ τὴν παρακοὴν γενο-
" μενης ἀλλοτριώσεως· διὰ τοῦτο, ἡ μετὰ σαρκὸς ἐπιδημία
" Χριστοῦ· ἡ τῶν εὐαγγελικῶν πολιτευμάτων ὑπολύπωσις· τὰ
" πάθη· ὁ σταυρὸς· ἡ ταφὴ· ἡ ἀνάστασις, ὥστε τὸν σωζό-
" μενον ἄνθρωπον διὰ μιμήσεως Χριστοῦ, τὴν ἀρχαίαν ἐκείνην
" υἱοθεσίαν ἀπολαβεῖν."

" *and*

" *and converſation deſcribed in the goſpel,*
" *of his paſſion, croſs, burial, and reſur-*
" *rection; that man, who is ſaved by*
" *the imitation of Chriſt, might regain*
" *that* ANTIENT ADOPTION. Where he
" plainly ſuppoſeth that man before his
" fall had the adoption of a ſon, and con-
" ſequently the Spirit of adoption. And
" ſo he expreſsly interprets himſelf after-
" wards in the ſame chapter: *By the*
" * *Holy Spirit we are reſtored into para-*
" *diſe, we regain the kingdom of heaven,*
" *we return to the adoption of ſons.* Again,
" (*Homil. adverſ. Eunomium* 5, p. 117.)
" which have theſe expreſs words: † *We*

* " Διὰ πνεύματος ἁγίου, ἡ εἰς παράδεισον ἀποκαλάσ-
" τασις· ἡ εἰς βασιλείαν οὐρανῶν ἄνοδος· ἡ εἰς υἱοθεσίαν
" ἐπάνοδος. *Vide ejuſdem Libri, cap.* 9."

† " Ἐν ἁγιασμῷ τῷ πνεύματος ἐκλήθημεν, ὡς ὁ ἀπόσ-
" τολος διδάσκει, τοῦτο ἡμᾶς ἀνακαινοῖ, καὶ πάλιν εἰκόνας
" ἀναδείκνυσι θεοῦ, διὰ λουτροῦ παλιγγενεσίας καὶ ἀνακαι-
" νώσεως πνεύματος ἁγίου υἱοθετούμεθα κυρίῳ· καινὴ πάλιν
" κίσις μεταλαμβάνουσα του πνεύματος, ἣ περ ἐστερημενη
" πεπαλαίωτο· εἰκὼν πάλιν θεοῦ ὁ ἄνθρωπος ἐκπεσῶν τῆς
" ὁμοιότητος τῆς θείας, καὶ παρασυμβληθεὶς κτήνεσιν ἀνοή-
" τοις καὶ ὁμοιωθεὶς αὐτοῖς.

" *are*

" *are called in the ſanctification of the*
" *Spirit, as the apoſtle teacheth. This*
" (Spirit) *renews us, and makes us again*
" *the image of God, and by the laver of*
" *regeneration, and the renewing of the*
" *Holy Ghoſt, we are adopted to the Lord,*
" *and the new creature again partakes of*
" *the Spirit, of which being deprived, it*
" *had waxed old. And thus man becomes*
" *again the image of God, who had fallen*
" *from the divine ſimilitude, and was be-*
" *come like the beaſts that periſh.*

" St. Cyril (7th *Dial. de Trin.* p. 653.)
" delivers the ſame doctrine with great
" perſpicuity and elegancy, in theſe words:
" * *For when the animal* (viz. man) *had*
" *turned*

* " Διανενευκότος γὰρ τοῦ ζώου πρός τὸ πλημμελὲς, καὶ
" τὴν εἰςποίητον ἁμαρτίαν ἐκ τῆς εἰσάπαν φιλοσαρκίας ἠρ-
" ρωγηκότος, τὸ πρὸς θείαν εἰκόνα διαμορφῶν αὐτόν, καὶ
" σημάνῃς δίκην ἀπορρήτως ἐνλεθειμενον ἀπενοσφίζελο πνεῦμα,
" φθαρλόν τε ὄτω, καὶ ἀκαλλὲς, καὶ τί γὰρ ἔχὶ τῶν ἐκτόπων
" συνειλοχὸς ἀναπέφανται; ἐπεὶ δὲ ὁ τῶν ὅλων γενεσιωργὸς
" ἀνακομίζειν ἔθελεν εἰς ἑδραιότηλα, καὶ ἐυκοσμίαν τὴν ἐν ἀρ-
" χαῖς τὸ διολισθῆσαν εἰς φθοραὶ, παράσημόντε, καὶ ἀκαλλὲς

" διὰ

" *turned aſide unto wickedneſs, and out of*
" *too much love of the fleſh had ſuperin-*
" *duced on himſelf the diſeaſe of ſin,* THAT
" SPIRIT WHICH FORMED HIM AFTER
" THE DIVINE IMAGE, AND AS A SEAL
" WAS SECRETLY IMPRESSED ON HIS
" SOUL, WAS SEPARATED FROM HIM, *and*
" *ſo he became corruptible and deformed,*
" *and every way vicious. But after that*
" *the Creator of the univerſe had deſigned*
" *to reſtore to its priſtine firmneſs and*
" *beauty that which was fallen into corrup-*
" *tion, and was become adulterated and de-*
" *formed by ſin ſuperinduced, he ſent again*
" *into it that divine and holy Spirit which*
" *was withdrawn from it, and which hath*
" *a natural aptitude and power to change*
" *us into the celeſtial image,* viz. *by trans-*
" *forming us into his own likeneſs.* And
" in the fourth book of the ſame work,

" διὰ τὴν εἰσποίητον γεγονὸς ἁμαρτίαν, ἐνῆκεν αὖθις αὐτῷ τὸ
" ἀποφοιτῆσαν πόλε θεῖον τε, καὶ ἅγιον πνεῦμα, μεταποιῆν
" εὖ μάλα πρὸς τὴν ὑπερκόσμιον εἰκόνα, καὶ πεφυκὸς καὶ δυ-
" νάμενον διὰ τὸ πρὸς ἰδίαν ἡμᾶς μεταρρυθμίζειν ἐμφέρειαν."

" *When*

" * *When the only begotten Son was made*
" *man, finding man's nature bereft of its*
" *antient and primitive good, he haſtened*
" *to transform it again into the ſame ſtate,*
" *out of the fountain of his fulneſs, ſend-*
" *ing forth* (the Spirit), *and ſaying*, RE-
" CEIVE THE HOLY GHOST."

* " Ὁτέ γέγονεν ἄνθρωπος ὁ μονογενὴς, ἐρήμην τὴν πάλαι,
" καὶ ἐν ἀρχαῖς ἀγαθὴν τὴν ἀνθρώπου φυσιν εὑρὼν, πάλιν αὐτὴν
" εἰς ἐκεῖνο μεταποιχειῶν ἠπείγετο, καθάπερ ἀπό πηγῆς του
" ἰδίου πληρώματος ἐνιεὶς τε καὶ λέγων· λαβέτε πνεῦμα ἅγιον."

St. CYRIL.

SECTION X.

The Opinions of Biſhop Pearſon *and Doctor* Scott, *Author of the Chriſtian Life, and an Advocate for* natural *Religion, againſt ſpiritual Pretenſions.*

BISHOP Pearſon is in the higheſt eſteem as a divine. His book on the Creed is recommended by tutors, by Biſhops' chaplains, and by Biſhops, to young ſtudents in the courſe of their reading preparatory to holy orders. It has been moſt accurately examined and univerſally approved by the moſt eminent theologues of our church, as an orthodox expoſition of the Chriſtian Creed. Let us hear him on the ſubject of the SPIRIT's evidence, which now engages our attention.

" As the increaſe and perfection, ſo the " original or initiation of faith is from the " Spirit of God, not only by an EXTER- " NAL PROPOSAL IN THE WORD, but by " an INTERNAL ILLUMINATION in the " ſoul,

" ſoul, by which we are inclined to the " obedience of faith, in *aſſenting* to thoſe " truths which unto a natural and carnal " man are fooliſhneſs. And thus we af- " firm not only the revelation of the will " of God, but alſo the *illumination of the* " *ſoul of man*, to be part of the office of " the Spirit of God *."

Dr. Scott, an orthodox divine, a zealous teacher of *morality*, celebrated for a book intitled the *Chriſtian Life*, ſays, " That with- " out the Holy Ghoſt we can do nothing; " that he is the AUTHOR AND FINISHER of " our faith, who worketh in us to will and " to do of his good pleaſure. His firſt " office is the *informing of our minds* with " the *light* of heavenly truth. Thus the " apoſtle prays that the God of our Lord " Jeſus Chriſt, the Father of glory, would " give unto them the Spirit of wiſdom and " revelation in the knowledge of him, " that THE EYES OF THEIR UNDERSTAND- " INGS being enlightened, they might

* Biſhop Pearſon on the Creed, Art. 8.

" know what is the hope of Chriſt's calling *;
" and we are told, *that it is by* RECEIVING
" THE SPIRIT OF GOD, *that we* KNOW
" *the things that are freely given us of*
" *God* †.

" Now this illumination of the Spirit is
" twofold: firſt, external, by that revela-
" tion which he hath given us of God's
" mind and will in the holy ſcripture, and
" that miraculous evidence by which he
" ſealed and atteſted it; *for all ſcripture*
" *is given by inſpiration of God* ‡; or, as it
" is elſewhere expreſſed, *was delivered by*
" *holy men, as they were moved by the Holy*
" *Ghoſt* §; and all thoſe miraculous teſti-
" monies we have to the truth and divin-
" ity of ſcripture are from the Holy
" Ghoſt, and, upon that account, are
" called the *demonſtration of the Spirit*;
" ſo that all the light we receive from
" ſcripture, and ALL the *evidence* we have
" that that light is divine, we derive ori-
" ginally from the Holy Spirit.

* Epheſ. i. 17, 18. † 1 Cor. ii. 12.
‡ 2 Tim. iii. 16. § 2 Pet. i. 21.

" But beſides this *external* illumination " of the Holy Spirit, there is alſo an INTERNAL one, which conſiſts in impreſſing that external light and evidence of " ſcripture upon our *underſtandings*, whereby we are enabled more clearly to *apprehend*, and more effectually to *believe* " it.

" For though the divine Spirit doth not " (at leaſt in the ordinary courſe of his " operation) illuminate our minds with " any *new* truths, or new evidences of " truth, but only preſents to our minds " thoſe *old* and primitive truths and evidences which he at firſt revealed and " gave to the world; yet there is NO " DOUBT but he *ſtill* continues not only to " *ſuggeſt* them both to our minds, but to " *urge* and *repeat* them with that importunity, and thereby to imprint them " with that clearneſs and efficacy, as that " if we do not, through a *wicked* prejudice againſt them, wilfully divert our " minds from them to vain or ſinful objects, we muſt unavoidably apprehend

" them

"them far more distinctly, and assent to "them far more cordially and effectually, "than otherwise we should or COULD "have done; for our minds are *naturally* "so vain and stupid, so giddy, listless, and "inadvertent, especially in spiritual things, "which are abstract from common sense, "as that, did not the Holy Spirit fre-"quently present, importunately urge, and "thereby fix these on our minds, our "KNOWLEDGE *of them would be so con-*"*fused*, and our belief so wavering and "unstable, as that they would never have "any preventing influence on our WILLS "and AFFECTIONS. So that our KNOW-"LEDGE and BELIEF of divine things, so "far as they are *saving* and effectual to "our renovation, are the fruits and pro-"ducts of this INTERNAL ILLUMINA-"TION *."

* Scott's Christian Life, part. ii. chap. 7.

SECTION XI.

Opinion of Biſhop Sanderſon *on the Impoſſibility of becoming a Chriſtian without ſupernatural Aſſiſtance.*

" IT was Simon Magus's error to think " that the gift of God might be pur- " chaſed with money; and it hath a " ſpice of his ſin, and ſo may go for a " kind of ſimony, to think that ſpiritual " gifts may be purchaſed with labour. " You may riſe up early and go to bed " late, and ſtudy hard, and read much, " and devour the marrow of the beſt au- " thors, and when you have done all, un- " leſs God give a bleſſing unto your en- " deavours, be as thin and meagre in " regard of true and uſeful learning, as " Pharaoh's * lean kine were after they " had eaten the fat ones. It is God that " both miniſtereth ſeed to the ſower, and " multiplieth the ſeed ſown; the principal " and the increaſe are both his."

* Geneſis, xli. 21.

" It

" It is clear that *all* Chriſtian virtues " and graces, though wrought immediately " by us, and with the free conſent of our " own wills, are yet the fruit of God's " Spirit working in us. That is to ſay, " they do not proceed originally from any " ſtrength of nature, or any inherent " power in man's free-will; nor are they " acquired by the culture of philoſophy, " the advantages of education, or any im- " provement whatſoever of natural abi- " lities by the helps of art or induſtry: " but are in truth the proper effects of " that ſupernatural grace which is given " unto us by the good pleaſure of God " the Father, merited for us by the pre- " cious blood of God the Son, and con- " veyed into our hearts by the ſweet and " ſecret inſpirations of God the Holy " Ghoſt. Love, joy, and peace are " fruits, not at all of the fleſh, but merely " of the Spirit.

" All thoſe very many paſſages in the " New Teſtament which either ſet forth " the unframeableneſs of our nature to the

" doing of any thing that is good, *(not*
" *that we are ſufficient of ourſelves to think*
" *a good thought; in me, that is in my*
" *fleſh, there dwelleth no good thing* *; and
" the like,) or elſe aſcribe our beſt per-
" formances to the glory of the grace of
" God, *(without me you can do nothing.*
" *All our ſufficiency is of God. Not of*
" *yourſelves; it is the gift of God. It is*
" *God that worketh in you both the will*
" *and deed* †; and the like,) are ſo many
" clear confirmations of the truth. Upon
" the evidence of which truth it is that
" our mother the church hath taught us
" in the public ſervice to beg at the hands
" of almighty God that he would *endue us*
" *with the grace of his Holy Spirit, to*
" *amend our lives according to his holy*
" *word:* and again, (conſonantly to the
" matter we are in hand with, almoſt *in-*
" *terminis,)* that he would *give to all men*
" *increaſe of grace to hear meekly his word,*

* 2 Cor. iii. 5. Romans, vii. 18.

† John, xv. 7. 2 Cor. iii. 5. Eph. ii. 8. Phil. ii. 13.

" *and*

" *and to receive it with pure affection, and*
" *to bring forth the fruits of the Spirit.*
" As without which grace it were not poſ-
" ſible for us to amend our lives, or to
" bring forth ſuch fruits, according as
" God requireth in his holy word.

" And the reaſon is clear: becauſe as
" the tree is, ſuch muſt the fruit be. Do
" men look to gather *grapes of thorns, or*
" *figs of thiſtles*?* Or can they expect from
" a *ſalt fountain* other than brackiſh wa-
" ter? Certainly, what is born of fleſh
" can be no better than fleſh. Who can
" bring a clean thing out of that which is
" unclean †? Or how can any thing that
" good is proceed from a heart, all the
" *imaginations of the thoughts whereof are*
" *only and continually evil ‡?* If we would
" have the fruit good, reaſon will (and
" our Saviour preſcribeth the ſame me-
" thod) that order be taken, *firſt to*
" *make the tree good* §.

* Mat. vii. 16. † Job. xiv. 4.
‡ Gen. vi. 5. § James, i. 21.

" But you will ſay, it is impoſſible ſo " to alter the nature of the fleſh as to " make it bring forth good ſpiritual fruit; " as it is to alter the nature of a crab or " thorn, ſo as to make it bring forth a " pleaſant apple. Truly, and ſo it is: if " you ſhall endeavour to mend the fruit " by altering the ſtock, you ſhall find the " labour altogether fruitleſs;—a crab will " be a crab ſtill, when you have done " what you can: and you may as well " hope to waſh an Ethiopian white, as to " purge the fleſh from ſinful pollution.

" The work therefore muſt be done " quite *another way:* not by *alteration*, " but ADDITION. That is, leaving the old " principle to remain as it was, by ſuper- " inducing *ab extra* a *new principle*, of a " different and more kindly quality. We " ſee the experiment of it daily in the " grafting of trees; a crabſtock, if it " have a cion of ſome delicate apple art- " fully grafted in it; look what branches " are ſuffered to grow out of the ſtock " itſelf, they will all follow the nature of

" the

" the ſtock, and if they bring forth any
" fruit at all, it will be ſour and ſtiptic.
" But the fruit that groweth from the
" graft will be pleaſant to the taſte, be-
" cauſe it followeth the nature of the
" graft. We read of λογος εμφυτος, an en-
" grafted word. Our carnal hearts are
" the old ſtock; which, before the word
" of God be grafted in it, cannot bring
" forth any ſpiritual fruit acceptable to
" God: but when, by the powerful opera-
" tion of his Holy Spirit, the word which
" we hear with our outward ears is in-
" wardly grafted therein, it then bringeth
" forth the fruit of good living. So that
" all the bad fruits that appear in our lives
" come from the old ſtock, the fleſh: and
" if there be any good fruit of the Spirit
" in us, it is from the virtue of that word
" of grace that is grafted in us."

What modern philoſopher or divine can rival this great prelate? His *Prælectiones* rank him with Ariſtotle; his piety, with the chief of the apoſtles.

SECTION XII.

Biſhop Smalridge *on the abſolute* Neceſſity *of Grace.*

" HE who is not convinced of the *ab-*
" *ſolute neceſſity* of God's grace to
" invigorate his obedience to the divine
" laws, muſt be a perfect ſtranger to
" himſelf, as well as to the word of God;
" and muſt have been as careleſs an ob-
" ſerver of what paſſes within his own
" breaſt, as of what is written in the holy
" ſcriptures. When one gives himſelf
" leiſure to take a ſurvey of his own fa-
" culties, and obſerve how dark-ſighted
" he is in the *perception* of divine truths;
" with what reluctance he ſometimes
" chuſes what his underſtanding plainly
" repreſents to him as good, and refuſes
" what his own conſcience directly pro-
" nounces to be evil; how apt his affec-
" tions are to rebel againſt the dictates of
" his

" his reaſon, and to hurry him another
" way than he knows he ſhould, and, in
" his ſober mind, very fain would go;
" when he ſets before his thoughts the
" great variety of duties commanded, and
" of ſins forbidden, and the perverſeneſs
" of his own depraved nature, which
" gives him an antipathy to thoſe duties
" and a ſtrong inclination to thoſe ſins;
" when he reflects on the power and cun-
" ning of his ſpiritual enemies, always
" alluring him to ſin, and ſeducing him
" from the practice of virtue; when he
" weighs with himſelf the neceſſity of
" practiſing every duty, and forſaking
" every kind of wickedneſs, in order to
" ſecure a good title to the promiſes of
" the goſpel; when he takes a view of
" thoſe particular obſtacles which hinder
" him in the exerciſe of ſeveral graces,
" and of the ſtrong temptations which
" prompt him to the commiſſion of ſe-
" veral ſins; when he conſiders the apt-
" neſs of human nature to grow weary of
" performing the ſame things, though in

" themſelves never ſo pleaſant, and its
" ſtill greater diſpoſition to grow faint,
" when the actions continually to be re-
" peated are burdenſome to fleſh and
" blood; when he compares the neceſſity
" of perſeverance with the difficulty of it,
" the prevalence of things preſent and
" ſenſible with the weakneſs wherewith
" thoſe objects affect us that are abſent
" and ſpiritual; when, I ſay, a conſider-
" ing man puts all theſe things together,
" he cannot but be convinced, that *nar-*
" *row is the path that leads unto* everlaſt-
" ing *life*, and that without ILLUMINATION
" from the SPIRIT OF GOD, he ſhall not be
" able rightly to diſcern it; that *ſtrait is*
" *the gate* which opens an entry into hea-
" ven; and that he cannot, by the force
" of his own natural ſtrength, without
" new power given him from above, and
" the ſecret influences of God's Holy
" Spirit, adding force and energy to his
" own endeavours, force his way through
" it. Conſcious, therefore, of his own
" weakneſs, he will acknowledge the ne-

" ceſſity

" ceſſity of God's grace; and being ready
" to ſink through his own natural weight,
" unleſs ſupported by foreign help, he
" will cry out with St. Peter, *Save me,*
" *Lord, or* ELSE *I periſh.*

" Some philoſophers of old flattered
" the pride and vanity of men, by teach-
" ing them that they wanted nothing to
" make them virtuous, but only a firm
" and ſteady reſolution of being ſo; that
" this reſolution they themſelves were
" maſters of, and might exert at their own
" pleaſure. They confidently boaſted that
" their happineſs was a thing wholly in
" their own power; that they need not
" aſk of the gods to be virtuous, nor con-
" ſequently to be happy, ſince they could
" be ſo without their aid or concurrence,
" or even in deſpight of them. The *Pe-*
" *lagians* afterwards raiſed their hereſies
" upon the principles which theſe heathen
" philoſophers had firſt broached; they
" engaged in the quarrel of depraved na-
" ture againſt divine grace: all our diſor-
" ders they would have to be the effects

" not

" not of ſin but of nature; all our evil in-
" clinations ſeemed to them capable of
" being ſubdued by our own unaſſiſted
" reaſon; and they did not think the ſuc-
" cour of any ſupernatural grace neceſ-
" ſary either for the combating of vice,
" or the maintenance of their integrity
" and virtue. But the ſober Chriſtian
" hath learned from the ſcriptures to ſpeak
" and to think more humbly of himſelf,
" and more becomingly and magnificently
" of God; we are there taught that *we*
" *are not ſufficient of ourſelves to think*,
" much leſs to do, *any thing as of our-*
" *ſelves*, *but that our ſufficiency is of God*;
" that *it is God*, *which worketh within us*
" *both to will and to do of his good plea-*
" *ſure*; that it is *by the Spirit* we muſt
" *mortify the deeds of the body*, if we would
" *live*; that it is God who, by his Spirit,
" *makes us perfect in every good work to*
" *do his will*, *working in us that which is*
" *well-pleaſing in his ſight*. The humble
" and devout Chriſtian being thus ſatisfied
" of the neceſſity of God's grace, both

" from

" from his own experience and from the
" ſcriptures, and being *aſſured* of the VITAL
" INFLUENCES of this ſpirit from the pro-
" miſes made to him in the goſpel, will
" not be over-curious to inquire into the
" ſecret and inconceivable manner of its
" operation. He will chooſe rather to
" FEEL theſe influences, than to *underſtand*
" or explain them, and will not doubt of
" that power, which, though he cannot
" give an account of as to the manner of
" its working, he plainly perceives to be
" great and marvellous from its mighty
" and wonderful effects: for when, in read-
" ing the holy ſcriptures, *he finds the veil*
" *of darkneſs removed from before his*
" UNDERSTANDING; when thoſe clouds of
" ignorance that had overcaſt his mind,
" are preſently diſperſed; when the doubts
" under which he had for ſome time la-
" boured are on a ſudden cleared; when
" ſuch pious thoughts as were wont to paſs
" tranſiently are long dwelt upon, ſo as to
" leave behind them deep and laſting im-
" preſſions; when theſe are ſuggeſted to
" him

" him without his ſeeking, and are urged
" and preſſed upon him ſo importunately,
" that he cannot chooſe but liſten unto
" them; when, from a calm and ſerious
" conſideration of the ſtate of his own ſoul,
" the odiouſneſs and danger of ſin, the
" beauty and neceſſity of holineſs, he is
" led to make good and pious reſolutions
" of ſerving God with greater purity for
" the time to come; when he finds a *ſud-*
" *den impulſe* upon his ſpirits, rouzing
" him up to the performance of ſome im-
" portant duty which he had before
" neglected; or an unexpected check,
" ſtopping him in the midſt of his courſe,
" when he is ruſhing on blindly and
" impetuouſly to the commiſſion of
" ſome heinous ſin; when in his *devo-*
" *tions he finds his attention fixed, his*
" *affections inflamed, and his heart melted*
" *within him*; when, while the voice of
" God's miniſter preaching the ſaving
" truths of the goſpel ſounds in his ears,
" he is ſenſible of an INWARD VOICE ſpeak-
" ing with greater force and efficacy to his
" ſoul,

" ſoul, to his underſtanding, and to his " heart; when, under the preſſure of any " grievous affliction, he feels unexpected " joy and comfort; when *light riſes up in* " *the* midſt *of darkneſs*; when there is " *given unto him beauty for aſhes, the oil* " *of joy for mourning, the garment of praiſe* " *for the ſpirit of heavineſs*; upon all theſe " and the like occaſions he is ſenſible of " the preſence and aid of God's Holy " Spirit, whoſe *grace* alone is *ſufficient* to " all theſe purpoſes, and whoſe *ſtrength* " *is* thus *made perfect in his weakneſs.*

" How the operation of God's Holy " Spirit is conſiſtent with the freedom of " our own wills; how far we are paſſive " and how far active in thoſe good " thoughts, words, and works, which " are wrought in us by the influence of " this Holy Spirit, the practical Chriſtian " doth not much trouble himſelf to in- " quire. Whatſoever is good in him, " that he devoutly aſcribes not unto him- " ſelf, but unto the grace of God which " was afforded him; *O Lord, not unto*

me,

" *me, but unto thy name be the glory*; " or having by his former ſins juſtly me- " rited to be left deſtitute and forſaken; " in the latter caſe he is as ready to make " Daniel's humble acknowledgment; *O* " *Lord, righteouſneſs belongeth unto thee,* " *but unto me confuſion of face.* He will " leave it to others to *diſpute* about the " nature, extent, and efficacy of this " grace, and will make it his own chief " labour to obtain, to cheriſh, and to im- " prove it; he ſtrives, according to the " beſt of his judgment, to form right no- " tions of its efficacy, but he is ſtill more " ſolicitous that no miſtakes in his opi- " nions about it may have any dangerous " influences upon his practice. He cannot " be very wrong in his notions, whilſt he " believes that man's will is neither ſo " free, as without God's grace to do good, " nor ſo enſlaved, as not to be at liberty " either to concur with or to reſiſt that " grace: but whether theſe notions about " a matter ſo intricate be exactly right or " not, he is fully aſſured that he cannot be

" miſtaken

" miſtaken in his meaſures of acting, if
" he exerts his own endeavours with as
" much vigour and earneſtneſs, as if by
" them alone he were finally to ſtand or
" fall; and, at the ſame time, implores
" God's grace with as much fervency, as
" if that alone could ſupport him:—if he
" neither relies ſo far on his own ſtrength,
" as not humbly to acknowledge that it is
" *God alone who works in him both to will*
" *and to do*, nor ſo far depends on the
" grace of God to ſave him, as to forget
" that he is required to work out his own
" ſalvation:—if, laſtly, at his approaches
" to the holy altar, he doth prepare him-
" ſelf for the reception of the bleſſed ſa-
" crament, with as much care, diligence,
" and ſcrupuloſity, as if the benefits he
" there expects did entirely depend upon
" the diſpoſition he brings along with him,
" and his own fitneſs to communicate, and
" yet, at the ſame time, not truſting on
" his own imperfect righteouſneſs, but on
" God's infinite mercy, he doth there,
" with faith, with humility, with rever-
" ence,

" ence, addreſs himſelf to that bleſſed " SPIRIT, who is the *giver of every good* " *and perfect gift*, that he may be fulfilled " with his grace and heavenly benedic- " tion."

I cannot but hope that theſe opinions of a claſſical ſcholar, a man adorned with all *elegant* and *polite* learning, as well as with philoſophy; a man, whoſe habits of life and ſocial connexions tended to remove him from all contagion of enthuſiaſm, will have great weight with the *elegant* and *polite* part of the world, in recommending the neglected or exploded doctrine of grace. No man needs bluſh to entertain the religious ſentiments of Biſhop Smalridge; nor can folly or fanaticiſm be *reaſonably* imputed to divines like him, whoſe minds were enriched with all the ſtores of ſcience, and poliſhed with all the graces of ornamental literature.

SECTION XIII.

Human Learning highly uſeful, and to be purſued with all Diligence, but cannot, of itſelf, furniſh EVIDENCES *of Chriſtianity completely ſatisfactory, like thoſe which the Heart of the good Chriſtian feels from the* divine Influence: *with the Opinion of Doctor* Iſaac Watts.

LEARNING ſhould be the handmaid of religion. She muſt not take upon her the office of a judge or arbitreſs. Her employment is highly honourable and uſeful, though ſubordinate. Let learning be cultivated, and continue to flouriſh and abound. Religion is the ſun to the ſoul; the ſource of light and the cheriſher of life. But becauſe there is a ſun, muſt there be no inferior lights? God has made the moon and the ſtars alſo, and pronounced that they are good.

Never

Never let the enemies to Chriſtianity triumph over it, by aſſerting that it is an enemy to learning, and tends to introduce the ignorance of barbariſm. Learning, under due regulations, contributes to ſoften the mind, and prepare it for the divine agency. A learned, virtuous, and religious man, whoſe religion is VITAL and truly Chriſtian, is a ſuperior being, even in this mortal ſtate, and may be imagined, by us his fellow-creatures, to be little lower than the angels.

Nobody can hold learning, and the inventions of human ingenuity, in higher eſteem than myſelf; I look up to them with affection and admiration. But after all, and however perfect and beautiful they may be, they are but HUMAN, the product of poor, ſhort-lived, fallible mortals. Whatever comes from the FATHER OF LIGHTS, from him who made that MIND which is capable of learning and ſcience, muſt deſerve more attention and honour than can poſſibly be due to the moſt beautiful and ſtupendous works of human ingenuity.

Theſe are not to be ſlighted, but beloved, purſued, rewarded. But I am a MORTAL. Every moment is bringing me nearer to that period when the curtain ſhall fall, and all *theſe things be hidden from my eyes*. My firſt attention and warmeſt affection therefore ought to be fixed on things ſpiritual and eternal.

All arts, all ſciences, muſt be ſecondary and inſtrumental to the attainment of DIVINE ILLUMINATION. I AM THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD, ſays Jeſus Chriſt. Can any *reaſonable* man reſt ſatisfied without coming to the light after ſuch a declaration? Will he be contented with the radiance of dim lights and falſe lights, when he is invited to approach the brilliant and the true?

Learning is neceſſary for the purpoſes of this life; it is an ornament and a defence. It is highly uſeful in religious inveſtigation. It furniſhes arguments to enforce morality, to perſuade to all that is good and great, and to deter from folly and vice. But let it ever keep to its own office, which is certainly, in religious matters,

ters, miniſterial. It can amuſe; it can inform; but it cannot ſupply the *ſummum bonum*, it cannot raiſe fallen man to his original ſtate. GRACE only can reſtore man to God's image. If learning could have done it, why were the heathens unreſtored? are not the infidels often learned? and would not the advent of our Lord and Saviour have been ſuperfluous, if learning could have repaired the ruins of the fall?

Few (as I have already ſaid) in the maſs of mankind are *learned*. They are perhaps as one to a million. What is to become of the millions then, if the goſpel of Jeſus Chriſt, by which alone they can live in the ſweet tranquillity of a ſtate of grace, and die with religious hope and confidence, cannot be received, with *ſufficient evidence*, without deep learning, logical and metaphyſical diſputation? What is to *prove* it to *them*, who have neither books, leiſure, or ability to ſtudy, if God himſelf do not teach them by his SPIRIT? Bleſſed be his name, he has taught them, and continues to teach them. It is among the *learned*

chiefly that INFIDELITY prevails. She inhabits libraries, and walks abroad in academic groves, but is rarely ſeen in the cottage, in the field, or in the manufactory. The poor and the unlearned do in general believe in the goſpel moſt firmly. What is the evidence which convinces them? It is the witneſs of the Spirit; and thanks be to him who ſaid *my grace is ſufficient for thee.* "He that believeth on the "Son of God hath this witneſs in himſelf."

The opinion of a man like Dr. Iſaac Watts on the true nature of Chriſtianity, is almoſt of itſelf deciſive. He was not only a devout and zealous Chriſtian, but a profound ſcholar, a natural philoſopher, a logician, and a metaphyſician. His life and converſation exhibited a pattern of every Chriſtian virtue. Let us hear him.

"Every true Chriſtian," ſays he, "has "a *ſufficient argument and* EVIDENCE to "ſupport his faith, without being able to "prove the authority of any of the ca-"nonical writings. He may hold faſt his "religion, and be aſſured that it is di-

" vine, though he cannot bring any learned
" proof that the book that contains it is
" divine too; nay, though the book itſelf
" ſhould even happen to be *loſt* or *de-*
" *ſtroyed*: and this will appear, with open
" and eaſy conviction, by aſking a few
" ſuch queſtions as theſe:

" Was not this ſame goſpel preached
" with glorious ſucceſs before the New
" Teſtament was written?

" Were not the ſame doctrines of ſal-
" vation by Jeſus Chriſt publiſhed to the
" world by the miniſtry of the apoſtles,
" and made effectual to convert thouſands,
" before they ſet themſelves to commit
" theſe doctrines to writing?

" And had not every ſincere believer,
" every true convert, this bleſſed witneſs
" in himſelf, that Chriſtianity was from
" God?

" Eight or ten years had paſſed away,
" after the aſcenſion of Chriſt, before any
" part of the New Teſtament was writ-
" ten; and what multitudes of Chriſtian
" converts were born again by the preach-

" ing

" ing of the word, and raiſed to a divine
" and heavenly life, long ere this book
" was half finiſhed or known, and that
" among the heathens as well as Jews.
" Great numbers of the *Gentile* world be-
" came holy believers, each of them hav-
" ing the *epiſtle of Chriſt written in the*
" *heart*, and bearing about *within them* a
" noble and convincing proof that this
" religion was divine; and that without a
" *written goſpel*, *without epiſtles*, and
" without a BIBLE.

" In the firſt ages of Chriſtianity, for
" ſeveral hundred years together, how
" few among the common people were
" able to read? How few could get the
" poſſeſſion or the uſe of a Bible, when all
" ſacred as well as profane books were of
" neceſſity copied by writing? How few
" of the populace, in any large town or
" city, could obtain or could uſe any ſmall
" part of ſcripture, before the art of print-
" ing made the word of God ſo common?
" And yet millions of theſe were regene-

" rated, ſanctified, and ſaved by the mi-
" niſtration of the goſpel.

" Be convinced then that Chriſtianity
" has a more noble *inward witneſs* be-
" longing to it than is derived from ink
" and paper, from preciſe letters and ſylla-
" bles. And though God, in his great
" wiſdom and goodneſs, ſaw it neceſſary
" that the New Teſtament ſhould be writ-
" ten, to preſerve theſe holy doctrines un-
" corrupted through all ages, and though
" he has been pleaſed to be the invariable
" and authentic rule of our faith and prac-
" tice, and made it a glorious inſtrument
" of inſtructing miniſters and leading men
" to ſalvation in all theſe latter times; yet
" Chriſtianity has a *ſecret witneſs* in the
" hearts of believers, that *does not de-*
" *pend on their knowledge and proof of*
" *the authority of the ſcriptures*, nor of
" any of the controverſies that in latter
" ages have attended the ſeveral manu-
" ſcript copies and different readings and
" tranſlations of the Bible.

" Now

" Now this is of admirable uſe and im-
" portance in the Chriſtian life, upon ſe-
" veral accounts. Firſt, if we conſider
" how few poor unlearned Chriſtians there
" are who are capable of taking in the
" arguments which are neceſſary to prove
" the divine authority of the ſacred writ-
" ings; and how few, even among the learn-
" ed, can well adjuſt and determine many of
" the different readings or different tranſ-
" lations of particular paſſages in ſcripture.
" Now a wiſe Chriſtian does not build his
" faith or hope merely upon any one or
" two ſingle texts, but upon the GENERAL
" SCOPE, ſum and ſubſtance of the goſpel.
" By this he FEELS a *ſpiritual life* of peace
" and piety begun in him. And *here* lies
" his EVIDENCE that CHRISTIANITY IS DI-
" VINE, and that theſe doctrines are from
" heaven, though a text or two may be
" falſely written or wrong tranſlated, and
" though a whole book or two may be
" hard to be proved authentic.

" The learned well know what need
" there is of turning over the hiſtories of

" ancient times, of the traditions and
" writings of the fathers, and all authors
" pious and profane; what need of critical
" ſkill in the holy languages and in ancient
" manuſcripts; what a wide ſurvey of va-
" rious circumſtances of fact, time, place,
" ſtyle, diction is neceſſary to confirm one
" or another book or verſe of the New
" Teſtament, and to anſwer the doubts of
" the ſcrupulous, and the bold objections
" of the infidel. Now how few of the
" common rank of Chriſtians, whoſe
" hearts are inlaid with *true faith* in the
" Son of God, and with *real holineſs*, have
" *leiſure*, books, inſtruction, advantages,
" and judgment ſufficient to make a tho-
" rough ſearch into theſe matters, and to
" determine, upon a juſt view of argu-
" ment, that theſe books were written by
" the ſacred authors whoſe names they
" bear, and that theſe authors were under
" an immediate inſpiration in writing
" them. What a glorious advantage is it
" then to have ſuch an INFALLIBLE TES-
" TIMONY *to the truth of the goſpel* wrought

" and

" and written in the heart by renewing
" grace, as does not depend on this labori-
" ous, learned, and ARGUMENTATIVE EVI-
" DENCE of the divine authority of the
" Bible, or of any particular book or
" verſe in it!

" Secondly, if we conſider what bold
" aſſaults are ſometimes made upon the
" faith of the unlearned Chriſtian by the
" deiſts and unbelievers of our age, by
" diſputing againſt the authority of the
" ſcripture, by ridiculing the ſtrange nar-
" ratives and ſublime doctrines of the
" Bible, by ſetting the ſeeming contradic-
" tions in a blaſphemous light, and then
" demanding, " How can you prize or
" how can you believe that this book is
" the word of God, or that the religion it
" teaches is divine?" In ſuch an hour of
" conteſt, how happy is the Chriſtian that
" can ſay, " Though I am not able to
" ſolve all the *difficulties* in the Bible, nor
" maintain the ſacred authority of it againſt
" the cavils of wit and learning, yet I am
" *well aſſured* that the doctrines of this

" book are ſacred, and the authority of
" them divine; for when I heard and re-
" ceived them, they changed my nature,
" they ſubdued my ſinful appetites, they
" made a new creature of me, and raiſed
" me from death to life; they made me
" LOVE GOD above all things, and gave
" me the lively and well-grounded hope
" of *his* love. Therefore I cannot doubt
" but that the CHIEF PRINCIPLES of this
" book are divine, though I cannot ſo
" well prove that the very words and
" ſyllables of it are ſo too; for it is the
" ſenſe of ſcripture, and not the mere let-
" ters of it, on which I build my hope.
" What if the ſcripture ſhould not be di-
" vine? What if this goſpel and the other
" epiſtles ſhould not be written by inſpira-
" tion? What if theſe ſhould be merely
" the words of men, and not the very
" word of God?—Though I cannot re-
" collect all the arguments that prove
" Matthew, Mark, and Luke to be di-
" vine hiſtorians, or Peter and Paul to be
" inſpired writers; yet the ſubſtance and

chief

" *chief ſenſe* of theſe goſpels and their
" epiſtles muſt needs be divine; FOR IT
" HAS BEGUN THE SPIRITUAL AND ETER-
" NAL LIFE IN MY SOUL; and THIS IS MY
" WITNESS, or rather the witneſs of the
" SPIRIT OF GOD within us, that CHRIST
" IS THE SON OF GOD, the SAVIOUR OF
" SINNERS, and the religion that I profeſs
" and practiſe is ſafe and divine."

" And though there are many and ſuffi-
" cient arguments drawn from criticiſm,
" hiſtory, and human learning to prove
" the ſacred authority of the Bible, and
" ſuch as may give abundant ſatisfaction
" to an honeſt inquirer, and full ſatisfac-
" tion that it is the word of God; yet THIS
" IS THE CHIEF EVIDENCE that the *great-*
" *eſt part of Chriſtians* can ever attain of
" the divine original of the holy ſcripture
" itſelf, as well as the truth of the doc-
" trines contained in it, namely, *That*
" *they have found a holy and heavenly*
" CHANGE paſſed upon them, by reading
" and hearing the propoſitions, the hiſ-
" tories, the precepts, the promiſes, and

" the threatenings of this book; and " thence they are wont to infer, that the " God of truth would not attend a book, " which was not agreeable to his mind, " with ſuch glorious inſtances of his own " POWER and GRACE.

" I have dwelt the longer on ſhewing " that the inward *witneſs* is ſuch a witneſs " to the truth of the Chriſtian religion as " does not depend on the *exact truth of* " *letters and ſyllables*, nor on the critical " knowledge of the copies of the Bible, " nor on this old manuſcript or the other " new tranſlation, becauſe every manu- " ſcript and every tranſlation has enough " of the goſpel to ſave ſouls by it, and " make a man a Chriſtian; and becauſe I " think this point of great importance in " our age, which has taken ſo many ſteps " to heatheniſm and infidelity; for this " argument or EVIDENCE will defend a " Chriſtian in the profeſſion of the true " religion, though he may not have ſkill " enough to defend his Bible.

" Why

" Why do you believe in Jeſus?" aſks " the unbeliever. If you have this an- " ſwer ready at hand, " I HAVE FOUND " THE EFFICACY AND POWER OF THE " GOSPEL IN MY HEART;" this will be " ſufficient to anſwer every cavil.

" The words of St. Paul to the Co- " rinthians have a reference to our preſent " ſubject. *Ye are manifeſtly declared to be* " *the epiſtle of Chriſt miniſtered by us;* " *written, not with* INK, *but with the* " SPIRIT OF THE LIVING GOD; *not in* " *tables of ſtone, but in fleſhly tables of the* " *heart* *."

Thus far Dr. Watts, in his ſermons on the *inward Witneſs to Chriſtianity*, where the reader will find a great deal of truly evangelical inſtruction. For my own part, I cannot but think this good man approached as nearly to Chriſtian perfection as any mortal ever did in this ſublunary ſtate; and therefore I conſider him as a better interpreter of the Chriſtian doctrines than the moſt learned critics, who, proud of

* 2 Cor. iii. 2, 3.

their reaſon and their learning, deſpiſed or neglected the very life and ſoul of Chriſtianity, the living everlaſting *goſpel*, the ſupernatural operation of DIVINE GRACE. And be it ever remembered, that Dr. WATTS was a man who cultivated his reaſon with particular care, who ſtudied the abſtruſeſt ſciences, and was as well qualified to become a verbal critic, or a logical diſputant on the ſcriptures, as the moſt learned among the doctors of the Sorbonne, or the greateſt proficients in polemical divinity.

SECTION XIV.

The Opinion of Dr. Lucas, *the celebrated Author of a Treatiſe on* HAPPINESS, *concerning the Evidence of Chriſtianity ariſing from divine* Communication.

" THERE is," ſays Dr. Lucas, " no " great need of acquired learning " in order to true illumination. Our Sa- " viour did not exact of his diſciples, as a " neceſſary preparation for his doctrine, " the knowledge of tongues, the hiſtory " of times or of nature; logic, metaphy- " ſics, or the like. Theſe indeed may " be ſerviceable to many excellent ends: " they may be great accompliſhments of " the mind, great ornaments, and very " engaging entertainments of life. They " may be, finally, very excellent and neceſ- " ſary inſtruments of, or introductions to " ſeveral profeſſions and employments: " but as to *religious* perfection and happi-

" neſs, to *theſe* they can never be indiſ-
" penſably neceſſary.

" A man may be excellently, habitually
" GOOD, without more *languages* than
" *one*; he may be fully perſuaded of thoſe
" great truths, that will render him maſ-
" ter of his paſſions and independant of
" the world; that will render him eaſy
" and uſeful in this life, and glorious in
" another, though he be no logician nor
" metaphyſician.

" The qualifications previouſly neceſ-
" ſary to *illumination* are two or three
" MORAL ONES, implied in that INFANT
" temper which our Saviour required in
" thoſe who would be his diſciples,—
" humility, impartiality, and a thirſt and
" love of truth."

" There is a knowledge which, like
" the ſummit of Piſgah where Moſes
" ſtood, ſhews us the land of Canaan, but
" does not bring us to it.

" How does the power of darkneſs, at
" this moment, prevail amidſt the light
" of the goſpel? Are men *ignorant?* No:

" but their knowledge is not *ſuch* as it " ought to be; it is not the *light of* " *life.*

" The underſtanding does not always " determine the will.

" Though every honeſt man be not " able to diſcover all the arguments on " which his creed ſtands, he yet may diſ- " cover ENOUGH; and what is more, he " may have an INWARD, VITAL, SENSIBLE " proof of them; he may FEEL the power, " the charms of holineſs, *experience* its " congruity and lovelineſs to the human " ſoul, ſo as that he ſhall have no doubts " or *ſcruples.* But beſides this, there is a " voice within, a divine Teacher and In- " ſtructor.

" Extraordinary natural parts are not " neceſſary to illumination. The goſpel " takes no notice of them. Such is the " beauty of holineſs, that it requires ra- " ther a fine SENSIBILITY ariſing from pu- " rity of heart, than quickneſs of intel- " lectual apprehenſion, to render us ENA- " MOURED of it."

A truth

A truth which involves the preſent and eternal happineſs of human beings, cannot be placed in too great a variety of lights, or too repeatedly enforced. "He that ſow-"eth to the *Spirit*," ſays St. Paul, "ſhall of "the Spirit reap life everlaſting *." When ſuch is the harveſt, every benevolent mind muſt wiſh to urge mankind, in this their ſeed-time, to ſow to the Spirit. What is ſo important cannot be inculcated by too frequent repetition. I therefore quote authors which occur to me in the courſe of my reflections on the ſubject, whoſe opinions, though ſimilar, may add weight to doctrines already advanced. Such is the above from Dr. Lucas, a moſt excellent divine, never charged with the leaſt tendency to blameable enthuſiaſm.

I wiſh my reader to pay particular attention to what he ſuggeſts on the INFANT TEMPER, required by our Lord in his followers. "Except," ſays Jeſus Chriſt, "ye "be converted, and become as *little chil-*"*dren*, ye ſhall not enter into the kingdom

* Galatians, vi. 8.

"of

" of God *."—" Verily I ſay unto you,
" Whoſoever ſhall not receive the king-
" dom of God as a LITTLE CHILD, he ſhall
" not enter therein †."

The amiable diſpoſitions of infants muſt therefore be produced in the heart, before the religion of Chriſt can be received into it. But are ſuch diſpoſitions beſt produced, or can they be produced at all, by ſubtle diſputations, by cold argumentation, by bringing forward objections in order to diſplay ingenuity in anſwers, laboured indeed and ſagacious, but, after all, unſatisfactory to many, and unintelligible to more?

Yet this mode of recommending Chriſtianity is the only one approved by ſome perſons of high authority; and there are thoſe who would not venture to preach the doctrine of grace, the *teaching of God* and a *ſpiritual underſtanding*, leſt they ſhould be numbered with enthuſiaſts, and loſe all chance of promotion and worldly eſteem. This danger muſt be

* Mat. xviii. 3. † Mark, x. 14.

voluntarily

voluntarily incurred by all who would ſucceed in repelling the rapid advances of modern infidelity. Chriſtianity flouriſhed wonderfully while its genuine doctrines, the glad tidings of grace, were preached; and it has been gradually declining, ever ſince it has become faſhionable, in order to diſcountenance fanaticiſm, to recommend mere heathen morality as the eſſence of Chriſtianity, and to make uſe of no other arguments to prove the truth of it, but ſuch as an ingenious man, without the ſmalleſt particle of religion in his heart, might produce. Profeſſional advocates, furniſhed with human arguments only and external evidence, appear to the true Chriſtian, as well as to the unbeliever, like lawyers pleading for a *fee*, on that ſide of the queſtion which they know to be wrong, or at leaſt are not convinced is right. It is indeed certain that a dull and plodding ſcholar may make a wonderful diſplay of erudition in defence of Chriſtianity, without feeling a lively ſenſe of it himſelf, or communicating it to his readers. His materials ſupply the adverſaries

verſaries with arms for freſh attacks, and at the ſame time fail in building an impregnable rampart round the citadel which he undertakes to defend. There is uſually ſome weak place at which the enemy enters; and, having once entered, he takes poſſeſſion of the fortreſs, and uſes the ſtores and ammunition againſt the very perſons who collected them with ſo much labour.

Nothing of this kind can happen when recourſe is had to the teaching of the Spirit. It overcomes the heart; it brings it to the lovely ſtate of infantine innocence and ſimplicity; and renders him who, like St. Paul was a perſecutor of it, a warm friend and advocate.

It is certain that the argumentative mode of addreſſing unbelievers, and a reliance on external evidence, has hitherto failed. Many of the moſt learned and able men of modern times, who were capable of underſtanding the hiſtorical, logical, and metaphyſical defences of Chriſtianity, have read them without conviction, and laughed at their laborious imbecillity.

It is time to try another mode: And all who are ſincere Chriſtians will favour the experiment; for they would rather ſee men converted to the true religion, though they ſhould become fervent, and zealous even to a degree of harmleſs enthuſiaſm, than totally alienated from it, and enliſted under the partizans of infidelity.

If men of the world and men of *learning** will not interpoſe to prevent the divine energy, we ſhall ſee it produce its genuine effects in all their vigour and maturity, as well in the world of grace as of nature. A ſecret operation gives life and growth to the tree, and ſo will it to the human ſoul. "I am the "*vine*, ye are the branches," ſays our Saviour: the branches will ſoon wither and decay, if the ſap flows not to them from the vine.

* Nec *philoſophos* ſe oſtentent: ſed ſatagant fieri THEODIDACTI. GREG. ix. *Ep. ad Univ. Paris.*

SECTION XV.

Paſſages from a well-known Book of an anonymous Author, intitled Inward Teſtimony.

" REAL Chriſtians find, that as ſoon
" as they apply themſelves to KNOW
" what is *comprehenſible*, in the ſacred
" ſcriptures, and to a ſincere endea-
" vour to DO what is *practicable*, ſo ſoon
" a FAITH in its INCOMPREHENSIBLE doc-
" trines is produced, and then is ful-
" filled, that *he that doth the will of God*
" *ſhall know of the doctrines whether they*
" *be of God.*

" The DIVINE SPIRIT concurs with the
" outward revelation in changing a man's
" *ſceptical* diſpoſition, and then he is *fixed:*
" otherwiſe he would be as ready as ever
" to embrace the firſt *plauſible* argument
" *againſt* the goſpel.

" We

" We have ſome, who, by their mere " *notional* knowledge of revelation, the " *outward teſtimony* to Chriſtianity, diſ- " believe the reality or neceſſity of any " acquaintance with the *inward teſtimony*, " by which the DIVINE SPIRIT produces a " ſerious ſpiritual frame, fitting the ſoul " to receive the ſanctifying impreſſions of " an *outward* revelation. They think " that reading of ſacred ſcripture, and " forming from thence right notions of " Chriſtianity, *in order to* TALK of it, " with a going the round of common " duties, and a not being guilty of com- " mon ſins, is the *whole of the Chriſtian* " religion, and all the meetneſs that is " neceſſary for heaven. A ſerious HEA- " VENLY FRAME, ſuitable to the true no- " tion of revelation, has no place in " them; they *ridicule* it in others, and " name it affectation, rather than any real " part of CHRISTIANITY.

" An ingenious mind may argue for " GOD againſt the *atheiſt*; for CHRIST " againſt

" againſt the *Socinian*; and for the out-
" ward teſtimony of the SPIRIT of Chriſt
" againſt the *Deiſt*; and he himſelf be no
" *real Chriſtian*: but no perſon can well
" diſplay this inward teſtimony of Chriſt
" in the ſoul, without the EXPERIENCE
" of it *."

* Jam hic videte magnum ſacramentum, Fratres. Magiſteria forinſecùs adjutoria quædam ſunt et admonitiones; CATHEDRAM IN CŒLO HABET QUI CORDA DOCET. AUGUST. *Tr.* 3. *in* 1 *Joan.*

SECTION XVI.

Dr. Townſon's *Opinions on the Evidence which is in this Book recommended as ſuperior to all other.*

" IF the word was enforced by mira-
" cles in the times only of its early
" publication, it has the ſtanding ſupport
" and EVIDENCE of another power, which
" is *ſtill as operative*, where we will allow
" it, as ever. This is declared and pro-
" miſed in the following paſſage: *Jeſus*
" *anſwered them and ſaid, My doctrine is*
" *not mine, but his that ſent me. If any*
" *man will do his will, he ſhall know of*
" *the doctrine whether it be of God, or*
" *whether I ſpeak of myſelf.*

" The perſon who enters on the ſtudy
" of a ſcience, of which he has only a ge-
" neral idea, muſt receive many things *at*
" *firſt* on the *authority* of his inſtructors.
" And ſurely there is no one, who, by his

" life

" life and works, has ſuch claim to truſt " and confidence in his words as the " Author and Finiſher of our faith. If " then we really deſire to know the cer- " tainty of his doctrine; if we have the " courage to ſacrifice meaner purſuits " to the wiſdom that is from above, and " the felicity of attaining it; we *ſhall ſtudy* " *the truth of his religion* as he directs, by " the PRACTICE OF ITS LAWS. And this " method, he aſſures us, will yield us the " repoſe and comfort of *firm perſuaſion.* " Continuing ſtedfaſt in ſuch a courſe of " diſcipline, we ſhall not ſeek after ſigns " from heaven, nor aſk to behold the " blind receive their ſight, the lame walk, " the deaf hear, or the dead raiſed up. " The healing efficacy and bleſſed in- " fluence of the goſpel will ſufficiently " vouch for its truth and excellence.

" The EVIDENCE which thus poſſeſſes " the ſoul is not liable to be impaired by " time, as might an impreſſion once made " on the ſenſes; but will ſhine more and " more unto a perfect day. For the prac- " tice of religion, by *purifying* the *heart*,

" will raiſe and improve the *underſtanding*
" to conceive more clearly and judge
" more rightly of heavenly things and di-
" vine truths: the view and contemplation
" of which will return upon the heart the
" warmth of livelier hopes and more vi-
" gorous incitements to obedience; and
" effectual obedience will feel and *teſtify*
" that it is the finger of God.

" For is nature able, by its own effi-
" ciency, to clear the eyes of the mind;
" to rectify the will; to regulate the af-
" fections; to raiſe the ſoul to its nobleſt
" object, in love and adoration of God;
" to employ it ſteadily in its beſt and hap-
" pieſt exerciſe, juſtice and charity to
" man; to detach its deſires from the
" pleaſures, profits, and honours of the
" world; to exalt its views to heavenly
" things; to render the whole life godly,
" juſt, and ſober? He, who impartially
" examines his own moral abilities by the
" pure and ſearching light of the goſpel,
" muſt diſcern their defects and weakneſs
" in every part; and when he well con-
" ſiders

" ſiders the tenor and ſpirit of this goſpel,
" muſt acknowledge that he is not of
" himſelf ſufficient for the attainments to
" which it calls and conducts its faithful
" votary.

" What then is it that hath taken him
" by the hand, and leads him on in this
" riſing path of virtue and holineſs; that
" prevents his ſteps from ſliding; or if his
" foot hath ſlipped, raiſes him again; that
" keeps him ſteady in the right way; or,
" if at any time he hath wandered out of
" it, recals him to it; that ſtrengthens
" him to reſiſt temptations, to endure
" toils, and ſo continue patiently in well-
" doing; that, as he advances, opens to
" his faith a ſtill brightening view of the
" heavenly Jeruſalem, through the gloom
" which our earthly ſtate hangs upon
" death and futurity; and animates him
" to live and walk by this faith?

" If theſe are exertions beyond the
" ſphere of mere human activity, the
" queſtion, whence ſuch improvement of

" ſoul and ſpirit and life proceeds, will
" admit of an eaſy and clear anſwer. It
" is God who bleſſes our earneſt petitions
" that we may do his will, and our ſincere
" endeavours to do it, with the GRACE OF
" HIS HOLY SPIRIT; who worketh in
" us both to will and to do of his good
" pleaſure; and thus verifies and fulfils the
" promiſes, made by Chriſt to thoſe who
" aſk in his name, of ſuccour and ſtrength
" from on high. Chriſt therefore is his
" beloved Son, by whom we are redeem-
" ed, and in whom we are accepted. The
" religion which he hath taught us, ſo
" worthy of God in the theory, and ſo
" favoured by him in the practice of its
" laws, proves its heavenly origin by the
" fruit it produces; and brings its divinity
" home to the breaſt of the devout pro-
" feſſor by EXPERIENCE of its power unto
" ſalvation.

" It is natural to conclude, that he who
" has this conviction of its certainty will
" be deſirous of perſuading others to the

" belief

" belief and practice of it; and will be of " an apt and fit diſpoſition to inſtruct them " in it."

There are ſcarcely any *recent* divines, whoſe opinions ought to have more weight than thoſe of Dr. Townſon. He lived, as he wrote, according to the true goſpel. He is univerſally eſteemed by the moſt learned and judicious theologiſts of the preſent day; and his opinions alone carry with them ſufficient authority to juſtify me fully in recommending that evidence of the goſpel truth which ariſes from divine influence, conſequent on obedience to its precepts. An orthodox life, I am convinced, is the beſt preparative to the entertainment of orthodox opinions; and I rejoice to find ſuch men as Townſon enforcing the doctrine, " that if any man " will do the will of Chriſt, he ſhall " KNOW of the doctrine whether it be of " God." He does not refer us to ſyſtematical or philoſophical works, but to the teaching of the Holy Ghoſt, for the attainment of this knowledge; a know-

ledge, compared to which all other is to man, condemned as he is ſhortly to die, but puerile amuſement, a houſe of cards, a bubble blown up into the air, and diſplaying deceitful colours in a momentary ſunſhine.

SECTION XVII.

Dr. Doddridge *on the Doctrine of Divine Influence.*

" ANY degree of divine influence on
" the mind, inclining it to *believe*
" *in Chriſt* and to practiſe virtue, is called
" GRACE. All thoſe who do indeed be-
" lieve in Chriſt, and in the main practiſe
" virtue, are to aſcribe it not merely or
" chiefly to their own wiſdom and good-
" neſs, but to the ſpecial operation of di-
" vine grace upon their ſouls, as the ori-
" ginal cauſe of it. None can deny, that
" God has ſuch an acceſs to the minds of
" men that he can work upon them in
" what manner he pleaſes: and there is
" great reaſon to believe, that his ſecret
" influence on the mind gives a turn to
" many of the moſt important events re-
" lating to particular perſons and ſo-

" cieties *, as it is evident many of the " public revolutions, mentioned in the " Old Teſtament, are aſcribed to this " cauſe †. Though the mind of man be " not invincibly determined by motives, " yet in matters of great importance it is " not determined without them: and it is " reaſonable to believe, that where a per- " ſon goes through thoſe difficulties which " attend faith and obedience, he muſt " have a very lively view of the great " engagements to them, and probably, " upon the whole, a more lively view " than another, who, in the ſame cir- " cumſtances, in all other reſpects acts in " a different manner. Whatever inſtru- " ments are made uſe of as the means of " making ſuch powerful impreſſions on " the mind, the efficacy of them is to be " aſcribed to the *continual agency* of the " firſt cauſe. The prevalence of virtue " and piety in the church is to be aſcribed

* Prov. xxi. 1.

† Ezra, i. 1. Religion of Nature delineated, p. 105—107.

" to

" to God, as the great original Author,
" even upon the principles of *natural re-*
" ligion. Good men in ſcripture, who
" appear beſt to have underſtood the na-
" ture of God, and his conduct towards
" men, and who wrote under the influence
" and inſpiration of his Spirit, frequently
" offer up ſuch petitions to God, as ſhew
" that they believed the reality and im-
" portance of his gracious agency upon
" the heart to promote piety and virtue *.
" God promiſes to produce ſuch a change
" in the hearts of thoſe to whom the other
" valuable bleſſings of his word are pro-
" miſed, as plainly implies that the altera-
" tion made in their temper and character
" is to be looked upon as his work †.

" The ſcripture expreſsly declares, in
" many places, that the work of *faith* in

* Pſal. li. 10—12. xxxix. 4. xc. 12. cxix. 12. 18. 27. 33—37. 73. 80. 133. 1 Chron. xxix. 18, 19. Eph. i. 16, &c. Col. i. 9—11, &c. *ſim.*

† Deut. xxx. 6. Pſal. cx. 3. Jer. xxxi. 33. xxxii. 39, 40. Ezek. xi. 19, 20. xxxvi. 26, 27. Compare Heb. viii. 8—13.

" the ſoul is to be aſcribed to God, and " deſcribes the *change* made in a man's " heart, when it becomes truly religious, " in ſuch language as muſt lead the mind " to ſome ſtrength ſuperior to our own by " which it is effected *. The *increaſe* of " Chriſtians in faith and piety, is ſpoken " of as the work of God; which muſt " more ſtrongly imply that the firſt be- " ginnings of it are to be aſcribed to him †. " The ſcripture does expreſsly aſſert the

* John, i. 13. iii. 3. 5, 6. Acts, xi. 18. xvi. 14. 2 Cor. iii. 3. Eph. i. 19, 20. ii. 1. 10. iv. 24. Phil. i. 29. Col. i. 11, 12. ii. 12, 13. *Vid.* James, i. 18. 2 Tim. ii. 25. To this catalogue we ſcruple not to add Eph. ii. 8. though ſome have objected that τȣ̃το cannot refer to πιστεως; ſince the like change of genders is often to be found in the New Teſtament; compare Acts, xxiv. 16. xxvi. 17. Phil. i. 28. 1 John, ii. 8. Gal. iii. 16. iv. 19. Matth. vi. *ult.* xxviii. 19. Rom. ii. 14. Elſner's Obſerv. vol. i. p. 128. Raphel. Obſerv. *ex* Herod. in Matth. xxviii. 19. Glaſſii Op. l. iii. Tract ii. de pr. Can. xvi. p. 524—526.

† Pſal. cxix. 32. Phil. i. 6. ii. 13. 1 Cor. vii. 25. iii. 7. iv. 7. xv. 10. 2 Cor. v. 5. Heb. xiii. 20, 21. 1 Pet. v. 10. Jude, ver. 24, 25.

" abſolute

" abſolute neceſſity of ſuch divine in-
" fluences on the mind, in order to faith
" and holineſs, and ſpeaks of God's giv-
" ing them to one while he with-holds
" them from another, as the great reaſon
" of the difference to be found in the cha-
" racters of different men in this import-
" ant reſpect *.

" It appears probable from the light of
" nature, and certain from the word of
" God, that FAITH and repentance are ul-
" timately to be aſcribed to the work of
" ſpecial grace upon the hearts of men †.
" As to the manner in which divine grace
" operates upon the mind, conſidering
" how little it is we know of the nature

* Deut. xxix. 4. Matth. xi. 25, 26. John, vi. 44, 45, 46. xii. 39, 40. Rom. ix. 18—23.

† Lime-ſtreet Lect. vol. ii. p. 242—245. Tillotſon's Works, vol. ii. p. 80, 81. Limb. Theol. l. iv. c. 14. § 4. 21. Brandt's Hiſt. of the Ref. vol. ii. p. 75. Doddridge on Regen. Serm. vii. p. 221—233. Jortin's Six Diſſertations, No. 1. Warburton's Doctrine of Grace. Foſt. Sermons, vol. ii. No. 5. præſ. p. 104, 105.

" and conſtitution of our own ſouls, and of " the frame of nature around us, it is no " wonder that it ſhould be unaccountable " to us *. Perhaps it may often be, by im- " pelling the animal ſpirits or nerves, in " ſuch a manner as is proper to excite " certain ideas in the mind with a degree " of vivacity, which they would not other- " wiſe have had: by this means various " paſſions are excited; but the great mo- " tives addreſſed to *gratitude* and *love* " ſeem generally, if not always, to operate " upon the will more powerfully than any " other, which many divines have there- " fore choſen to expreſs by the phraſe of " *delectatio victrix* †."

* John, iii. 8.

† Compare Deut. xxx. 6. Pſal. cxix. 16. 20. 32. 47, 48. 97. 103. Pſal. xix. 10, 11. Rom. vii. 22. 1 John, iv. 18, 19. Rom. v. 5. Le Blanc's Theſ. p. 527, § 53. Burn. Life of Roch. p. 43—51. Barclay's Apol. p. 148. Burnet on Art, p. 120. Whitby Comment. vol. ii. p. 289, 290. Scougal's Works, p. 6—10. Seed's Serm. vol. i. p. 291. Ridly on the Spirit, p. 210. King's Origin of Evil, p. 71. 376—380, fourth edition.

SECTION XVIII.

The Opinion of Soame Jenyns *on the fundamental Principles of Chriſtianity.*

" IF Chriſtianity is to be learned out of
" the New Teſtament, and *words have*
" *any meaning* affixed to them, the funda-
" mental principles of it are theſe:
" That mankind came into this world
" in a depraved and fallen condition; that
" they are placed here for a while, to give
" them an opportunity to work out their
" ſalvation; that is, by a virtuous and
" pious life to purge off that guilt and
" depravity, and recover their loſt ſtate
" of happineſs and innocence in a future
" life; that this they are unable to per-
" form without the GRACE AND ASSIST-
" ANCE OF GOD; and that, after their
" beſt endeavours, they cannot hope for
" pardon from their own merits, but only
" from the merits of Chriſt, and the atone-
" ment made for their tranſgreſſions by his

" ſufferings and death. This is clearly
" the ſum and ſubſtance of the Chriſtian
" diſpenſation; and ſo adverſe is it to all
" the principles of human *reaſon*, that if
" brought before her tribunal, it muſt
" inevitably be condemned. If we give
" no credit to its divine authority, any
" attempt to reconcile them is uſeleſs;
" and, if we believe it, preſumptuous in
" the higheſt degree. To prove the REA-
" SONABLENESS of a revelation, is in fact
" to deſtroy it; becauſe a revelation im-
" plies information of ſomething which
" *reaſon cannot diſcover*, and therefore
" muſt be different from its deductions,
" or it would be no revelation."

The opinion of a profeſſed wit and man of faſhion may have weight with thoſe who are prejudiced againſt profeſſional divines. It has been doubted by many whether Mr. Jenyns was a ſincere Chriſtian. I am inclined to believe that he was ſincere. As, in recommending Chriſtianity, *it is right to become all things to all men, that we may ſave ſome*, his teſtimony is admitted

admitted in this place, though his lively manner of writing throws an air of levity on ſubjects, which, from their important nature, muſt always be conſidered as *grave* by all the partakers of mortality, who think juſtly and feel acutely.

SECTION XIX.

The Opinion of Biſhop Horſley *on the prevalent Neglect of teaching the* peculiar DOCTRINES *of Chriſtianity, under the Idea that* Moral Duties *conſtitute the Whole or the better Part of it. Among the* peculiar *Doctrines is evidently included that of Grace, which the Methodiſts inculcate, (as the Biſhop intimates,)* not *erroneouſly.*

BISHOP Horſeley has proved himſelf a mathematician and philoſopher of the firſt rank, as well as a divine. All his works diſplay ſingular vigour of intellect. He cannot be ſuſpected of weak ſuperſtition or wild fanaticiſm. To the honour of Chriſtianity, the editor of Newton, as well as Newton himſelf, is a firm ſupporter of its moſt myſterious doctrines. I deſire the reader to weigh well the words of this able divine, as they were delivered in a charge to his clergy.

" A maxim

" A maxim has been introduced," ſays he, " that the laity, the more illiterate " eſpecially, have little concern with the " myſteries of revealed religion, provided " they be attentive to its duties; whence " it hath ſeemed a ſafe and certain con- " cluſion, that it is more the office of a " Chriſtian teacher to preſs the practice " of religion upon the conſciences of his " hearers, than to inculcate and inſert its " doctrines.

" Again, a dread of the pernicious " tendency of ſome extravagant opinions, " which perſons, more to be eſteemed for " the warmth of their piety than the " ſoundneſs of their judgment, have " grafted in modern times, upon the " doctrine of juſtification by faith, as it is " ſtated in the 11th, 12th, and 13th of " the Articles of our Church, (which, " however, is no private tenet of the " church of England, but the common " doctrine of all the firſt reformers, not " to ſay that it is the very *corner-ſtone of* " *the whole ſyſtem of redemption*,) a " dread

" dread of the pernicious tendency of " thoſe extravagant opinions, which ſeem " to emancipate the believer from the au- " thority of all moral law, hath given ge- " neral credit to another maxim; which " I never hear without extreme concern " from the lips of a divine, either from " the pulpit or in familiar converſation; " namely, that practical religion and mo- " rality are one and the ſame thing: that " moral duties conſtitute the whole, or by " far the better part, of practical Chriſt- " ianity.

" Both theſe maxims are erroneous. " Both, ſo far as they are received, have " a pernicious influence over the miniſtry " of the word. The firſt moſt abſurdly " ſeparates practice from the motives of " practice. The ſecond, adopting that " ſeparation, reduces practical Chriſtian- " ity to heathen virtue; and the two, " taken together, have much contributed " to diveſt our ſermons of the *genuine* " *ſpirit and ſavour of Chriſtianity*, and to " reduce them to mere moral eſſays: in

" which

" which moral duties are enforced, not,
" as indeed they might be to good pur-
" poſe, by ſcriptural motives, but by ſuch
" arguments as no where appear to ſo
" much advantage as in the writings of
" the heathen moraliſts, and are quite out
" of their place in a pulpit. The rules
" delivered may be obſerved to vary ac-
" cording to the temperament of the
" teacher. But the ſyſtem chiefly in re-
" queſt, with thoſe who ſeem the moſt in
" earneſt in this ſtrain of preaching, is the
" ſtrict but impracticable, unſocial, ſullen
" moral of the *Stoics*. Thus, under the
" influence of theſe two pernicious max-
" ims, it too often happens that we loſe
" ſight of that which is our proper office,
" to publiſh the word of reconciliation,
" to propound the terms of peace and
" pardon to the penitent, and we make
" no other uſe of the high commiſſion
" that we bear, than to come abroad one
" day in the ſeven, dreſſed in ſolemn
" looks, and in the external garb of holi-
" neſs, to be the apes of Epictetus.

" The

" The firſt of the two, which excludes " the laity from all concern with the doc- " trinal part of religion, and directs the " preacher to let the doctrine take its " chance, and to turn the whole attention " of his hearers to practice, muſt tacitly " aſſume for its foundation (for it can ſtand " upon no other foundation) this complex " propoſition: Not only that the practice " of religious duties is a far more excel- " lent thing in the life of man, far more or- " namental of the Chriſtian profeſſion, than " any knowledge of the doctrine without " the practice; but, moreover, that men " may be brought to the practice of re- " ligion without previous inſtruction in its " doctrines; or in other words, that faith " and practice are, in their nature, ſepar- " able things. Now the former branch " of this double aſſumption, that virtue is " a more excellent thing in human life " than knowledge, is unqueſtionably true, " and a truth of great importance, which " cannot be too frequently or too earneſtly " inculcated. But the ſecond branch of

" the

" the aſſumption, that faith and practice
" are ſeparable things, is a groſs miſtake,
" or rather a manifeſt contradiction. Prac-
" tical holineſs is the end; faith is the
" means: and to ſuppoſe faith and prac-
" tice ſeparable, is to ſuppoſe the end at-
" tainable without the uſe of means. The
" direct contrary is the truth. The prac-
" tice of religion will always thrive, in
" proportion as its doctrines are generally
" underſtood and firmly received; and
" the practice will degenerate and decay,
" in proportion as the doctrine is miſun-
" derſtood or neglected. It is true, there-
" fore, that it is the great duty of a
" preacher of the goſpel to preſs the prac-
" tice of its precepts upon the conſciences
" of men; but then it is equally true, that
" it is his duty to enforce this practice in
" a particular way; namely, by inculcat-
" ing its doctrines. The motives which
" the revealed doctrines furniſh, are the
" only motives he has to do with, and the
" only motives by which religious duty
" can be effectually enforced.

" I am

" I am aware, that it has been very " much the faſhion, to ſuppoſe a great " want of capacity in the common people, " to be carried any great length in reli- " gious knowledge, more than in the ab- " ſtruſe ſciences. That the world and all " things in it had a maker; that the " Maker of the world made man, and " gave him the life which he now enjoys; " that he who firſt gave life, can at any " time reſtore it; that he can puniſh, in " a future life, crimes which he ſuffers to " be committed with impunity in this; " ſome of theſe firſt principles of religion " the vulgar, it is ſuppoſed, may be " brought to comprehend. But the *pe-* " *culiar doctrines* of revelation, the tri- " nity of perſons in the undivided God- " head; the incarnation of the ſecond " perſon; the expiation of ſin by the Re- " deemer's ſufferings and death; the effica- " cy of his interceſſion; THE MYSTERIOUS " COMMERCE OF THE BELIEVER'S SOUL " WITH THE DIVINE SPIRIT; theſe things " are ſuppoſed to be far above their reach.

" If this were really the caſe, the condition
" of man would indeed be miſerable, and
" the proffer of mercy, in the goſpel,
" little better than a mockery of their
" woe; for the conſequence would be,
" that the common people could never
" be carried beyond the firſt principles of
" what is called natural religion. Of the
" efficacy of natural religion, as a rule of
" action, the world has had the long ex-
" perience of 1600 years. For ſo much
" was the interval between the inſtitution
" of the Moſaic church, and the publica-
" tion of the goſpel. During that interval,
" certainly, if not from an earlier period,
" natural religion was left to try its powers
" on the heathen world. The reſult of the
" experiment is, that its powers are of no
" avail. Among the vulgar, natural re-
" ligion never produced any effect at all;
" among the learned, much of it is to be
" found in their writings, little in their
" lives. But if this natural religion, a
" thing of no practical efficacy, as expe-
" riment has demonſtrated, be the utmoſt

" of

" of religion which the common people " can receive, then is our preaching vain, " Chriſt died in vain, and man muſt ſtill " periſh. Bleſſed be God! the caſe is " far otherwiſe. As we have, on the one " ſide, experimental proof of the inſigni- " ficance of what is called natural religion; " ſo, on the other, in the ſucceſs of the " firſt preachers of Chriſtianity we have " an experimental proof of the ſufficiency " of revealed religion to thoſe very ends " in which natural religion failed. In " their ſucceſs we have experimental " proof that there is nothing in the great " myſtery of godlineſs, which the vulgar, " more than the learned, want capacity " to apprehend, ſince, upon the firſt " preaching of the goſpel, the illiterate, " the ſcorn of phariſaical pride, who knew " not the law, and were therefore deemed " accurſed, were the firſt to underſtand, " and to embrace the Chriſtian doc- " trine.****

" An OVER-ABUNDANT zeal to check the " phrenzy of the METHODISTS, firſt intro-

" duced

" duced that unſcriptural language which
" confounds religion and morality.****
" The great crime and folly of the *Me-*
" *thodiſts* conſiſts not ſo much in *hetero-*
" *doxy*, as in fanaticiſm; not in PERVERSE
" DOCTRINE, but rather in a diſorderly zeal
" for the propagation of the TRUTH.****
" Reaſon, till ſhe has been taught by the
" lively oracles of God, knows nothing
" of the *ſpiritual life*, and the food brought
" down from heaven for its ſuſtenance."

The Biſhop here intimates, that " our " ſermons are often diveſted of the *genuine* " *ſpirit* and *ſavour* of Chriſtianity." If ſo, it is no wonder that our churches are forſaken and our religion deſpiſed. It is a fact, to which I have frequently been an eye-witneſs, that ſpacious churches in London, capable of containing thouſands, are almoſt empty, notwithſtanding the preachers every-where inculcate excellent morality. Wherever indeed there appears, what the common people call, an EVANGELICAL preacher, the churches are ſo crouded, that it is difficult to gain admittance.

mittance. The multitude hunger and thirſt for the ſpiritual food; yet *evangelical* preaching is diſcouraged by many *in high places*, becauſe it is ſaid to ſavour of enthuſiaſm and to delude the vulgar *. But it is this preaching alone which will preſerve Chriſtianity among us, and cauſe it to be conſidered as any thing better than a ſtate-engine for the depreſſion of the people.

* ERASMUS was a conſummate judge of preaching and preachers. Let us hear him.

Doctos puto quotquot crediderunt EVANGELIO. *Cur enim indocti debeant appellari, qui, (ut nihil aliud,) e ſymbolo apoſtolorum didicerunt illam* ULTRAMUNDANAM PHILOSOPHIAM, *quam non Pythagoras aut Plato, ſed ipſe* DEI FILIUS *tradidit hominibus; qui a* CHRISTO *docti ſunt, quâ viâ ad quem felicitatis ſcopum tendere. Ubicunque eſt* VERA SANCTITAS, *ibi eſt* MAGNA PHILOSOPHIA *minimeque vulgaris eruditio. Sed tamen inter hos egregiè doctos excellunt, quibus peculiari* SPIRITUS *munificentiâ datum eſt, ut ad juſtitiam erudiant multos; quibus* DOMINUS *dedit* labia, *non in quibus illa gentium* πειθως *flexanima, ſed in quibus ex* UNCTIONE SPIRITUS *diffuſa eſt* GRATIA CŒLESTIS. ERASM. *Eccleſ.*

SECTION XX.

The Church of England teaches the true Doctrine of Grace.

In recommending to more general notice the doctrine of grace, I make no pretenſions to a new diſcovery. It is obviouſly the doctrine of the Goſpel; it is obviouſly the doctrine of the Church; it is fully acknowledged by all who ſincerely uſe that form of prayer, which is eſtabliſhed by the authority not only of thoſe who compoſed it, but of thoſe who ever ſince its compoſition, even to the preſent day, retain it in the divine ſervice.

Biſhop Gibſon, who was certainly a zealous friend to the Church of England, has collected a number of paſſages from the liturgy, to ſhew that the public offices of the Church are duly regardful of the gifts and graces of the Holy Spirit.

" In the daily ſervice, we pray to God " to grant us true repentance and his Holy

" Spirit—to repleniſh the King with the " grace of his Holy Spirit—to endue the " Royal Family with his Holy Spirit— " to ſend down upon our Biſhops and " Curates, and all Congregations com- " mitted to their charge, the *healthful* " *Spirit of his grace*—that the Catholic " Church may be guided and governed " by his *good Spirit*, and that the fellowſhip " of the *Holy Ghoſt* may be ever with us.

" In the Litany we pray that God will " *illuminate* all Biſhops, Prieſts, and Dea- " cons with the true knowledge and un- " derſtanding of his Word—will endue us " with the *grace* of his Holy Spirit, and " that we may all bring forth the fruits of " the Spirit.

" In the Collects we pray that God will " grant us the true circumciſion of the " Spirit, that our hearts and all our mem- " bers being mortified from all worldly " and carnal luſts, we may in all things " obey his bleſſed will—that God will " ſend his Holy Ghoſt, and pour into our " hearts the moſt excellent gift of charity

" —that

" —that we may ever obey the *godly mo-*
" *tions of the Spirit* in righteouſneſs and
" true holineſs—that by his holy inſpira-
" tion we may think thoſe things that
" be good, and by his merciful guiding
" may perform the ſame—that God will
" not leave us comfortleſs, but ſend to us
" his Holy Ghoſt to comfort us—that by
" his Spirit we may have a right judg-
" ment in all things, and ever more re-
" joice in his holy comfort—that his Holy
" Spirit may in all things direct and rule
" our hearts—that he will cleanſe the
" thoughts of our hearts by the inſpira-
" tion of his Holy Spirit.

" In the office for Confirmation, we
" pray for the perſons to be confirmed,
" that God will ſtrengthen them with the
" Holy Ghoſt, the Comforter, and daily
" increaſe in them his manifold gifts of
" grace, the ſpirit of wiſdom and under-
" ſtanding, the ſpirit of counſel and ghoſt-
" ly ſtrength, the ſpirit of knowledge and
" true godlineſs—that he will fill them
" with the ſpirit of his holy fear—and that

" they may daily increaſe in his Holy Spi-
" rit more and more."

The articles of original ſin, free-will, and juſtification evince that the Church of England maintains the doctrine of light, ſanctity, and life, deriveable from the operation of the Holy Ghoſt. And there is a curious paſſage in a book, written by Archbiſhop Cranmer and the Committee of Divines, entitled *Neceſſary Erudition for a Chriſtian Man*, which fully declares, that, " beſides many other evils that came " by the fall of man, the high power " of man's reaſon and freedom of will " were wounded and corrupted; and all " men thereby brought into ſuch blind-" neſs and infirmity, that they cannot " eſchew ſin, *except they be illuminated* " and made free by an *eſpecial grace*, that " is to ſay, by *a ſupernatural help* and " *working of the Holy Ghoſt* *."

* This book was publiſhed by Henry VIII. 1543, and approved by the Lords Spiritual and Temporal and the Lower Houſe of Parliament.

There

There can be no doubt, in the mind of an impartial inquirer, that the church teaches the doctrine of ſupernatural influence in plain and ſtrong terms; and that it derives it from the holy ſcriptures. "For "it is by the Spirit of wiſdom that our "underſtandings are enlightened: it is by "the Spirit that we are rooted and grounded "in love, and that our ſouls are purified in "obeying the truth; it is by the Spirit that "we are called unto liberty; for where the "ſpirit of the Lord is, there is liberty; "in a word, it is by the Spirit that all our "infirmities are helped, and that we are "ſtrengthened with might in the inner "man*."

"Without me," ſays Chriſt, "ye can "do nothing." Our bleſſed Saviour opened the underſtandings of his diſciples, that they might underſtand the ſcriptures. The Lord opened the heart of Lydia, that ſhe attended to the things that were

* Eph. i. 17. 1 Pet. 22. Gal. v. 13. 2 Cor. iii. 17. Rom. viii. 26. Epheſ. iii. 16, 17.

ſpoken of Paul. The natural man receiveth not the things of the ſpirit of God; for they are fooliſhneſs unto him; neither can he know them, becauſe they are ſpiritually diſcerned. That the God of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, the Father of glory, may give unto you the ſpirit of wiſdom and revelation, in the knowledge of him, that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the ſaints. For God, who commanded the light to ſhine out of darkneſs, hath ſhined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jeſus Chriſt.—No man can ſay that Jeſus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghoſt.—For by grace ye are ſaved through faith; and that not of yourſelves; it is the gift of God*.

If there be meaning in words, theſe paſſages evince the reality and neceſſity of

* John, xv. 5. Acts, xvi. 14. Epheſ. i. 17, 18. 1 Cor. xii. 3. Luke, xxiv. 45. 1 Cor. ii. 14. 2 Cor. iv. 6.

internal

internal illumination from the great fountain of light. And what ſays the homily of the church? "In reading of God's "word, he moſt profiteth, not always "that is moſt ready in turning of the "book, or in ſaying of it without the "book, but he that is moſt turned into "it, that is, moſt inſpired with the Holy "Ghoſt." In the ſame homily, a paſſage from Chryſoſtom is quoted to the following purport: "Man's human and "worldly wiſdom and ſcience is not needful to the underſtanding of ſcripture, "but the revelation of the Holy Ghoſt, "who inſpireth the *true meaning* unto "them that with humility and diligence "do ſeek therefore."

In the Ordination Office, the biſhop ſays to the candidates for prieſt's orders, "Ye cannot have a mind or will thereto "of yourſelves, for the will and ability is "given of God alone. Therefore ye "ought and have need to pray earneſtly "for the HOLY SPIRIT. You will con-"tinually pray to God the Father, by the

" mediation of our only Saviour Jeſus " Chriſt, for the heavenly aſſiſtance of the " Holy Ghoſt."

A great number of citations might be brought to prove that the doctrine of grace or ſupernatural aſſiſtance is eſtabliſhed by the church in exact conformity to the ſcriptures * ; but it is not neceſſary to inſiſt on a truth which is evident to every one who reads the Common-prayer book and the Bible.

* It never can be conſiſtent with the character of an *honeſt man* ſolemnly to ſubſcribe to the doctrines of grace, ſeriouſly to pray in the church for divine influence, and then to teach and preach againſt the whole doctrine.

SECTION XXI.

On the Means of obtaining the Evidence *of Chriſtianity, afforded by the Holy Spirit.*

I NOW come to the moſt important part of my ſubject. I have produced, as I intended, the unexceptionable authority of great and good men, moſt eminent divines, to countenance and ſupport me in recommending, above all other evidence, the evidence of the Holy Ghoſt, to the truth of Chriſtianity. After the ſuffrages of ſuch men in favour of this ſublime doctrine, no man can juſtly call it heterodox or improperly enthuſiaſtical. I could indeed cite many other moſt reſpectable authorities; but I have already exceeded the juſt limits of quotation. It now remains to point out the means of obtaining this evidence.

FAITH IS THE GIFT OF GOD *. To the Giver only it belongs to preſcribe the

* Eph. ii. 8.

means of obtaining his bounty. He has preſcribed the WRITTEN WORD and PRAYER. *Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the* WORD OF GOD *. But the whole tenour of the Goſpel proves, that the WRITTEN WORD has not *efficacy* of itſelf to convince our underſtandings, nor reform our hearts; to produce either faith in God or repentance from dead works, *without the aid of the Holy Ghoſt*.

Now the aid of the Holy Ghoſt is promiſed to PRAYER: "If ye," ſays our Saviour, "being evil, know how to give "good gifts unto your children, how much "more ſhall God give the HOLY SPIRIT "to them that aſk him?"

The Holy Spirit, it appears from this paſſage, is the beſt gift which the beſt, wiſeſt, and moſt powerful of Beings can beſtow, and he has promiſed it thoſe who aſk it with faith and humility. An eaſy condition of obtaining the greateſt *comfort* of which the heart of man is capable,

* Rom. x. 7.

together

together with full evidence of the *truth of Chriſtianity*.

But do the inquirers into the truth of Chriſtianity ſeek its evidence in this manner? Do they fall on their knees, and lift up their hearts in ſupplication? It appears rather that they truſt to their own *power*, than to the *power* of God. They take down their folios, they have recourſe to their logic, their metaphyſics, nay even their *mathematics* *, and examine the mere hiſtorical and external evidence with the eyes of criticiſm and heathen philoſophy. The *unbelievers*, on the other hand, do the ſame; and, as far as wit and ſubtle reaſoning goes, there are many who think that a Tindal and a Collins were more than equal to a Clarke and a Coneybeare. There is no doubt but that infidelity is diffuſed by theological *controverſy*, whenever the illumination of the Spirit, the SANC-

* See Ditton, Baxter, Huet, and many others, who undertake to *demonſtrate*, almoſt *geometrically*, the truth of the goſpel.

TITY of the Goſpel, is entirely laid aſide, and the whole cauſe left to the deciſion of human wit and invention.

He that would be a Chriſtian indeed, and not merely a diſputant or talker about Chriſtianity, muſt ſeek better evidence than man, ſhort-ſighted as he is with the moſt improved ſagacity, ignorant as he is with the deepeſt learning, can by any means afford. He muſt, in the words of the Pſalmiſt *, "*open his mouth and draw* "*in the Spirit.*" The Holy Ghoſt will give him the SPIRIT OF SUPPLICATION †, which will breathe out in prayer, and inhale from him who firſt inſpired the *divine particle*‡, freſh ſupplies of grace. He muſt *continue inſtant in prayer*. This will preſerve his mind in a ſtate fit to receive the Holy Viſitant from on high, who brings with him balſam for the heart, and light for the underſtanding. The reſult will be full evidence of Chriſtianity, full confidence in Jeſus Chriſt, joy and peace on earth,

* Pſal. cxix. 131. † Zach. xii. 10.
‡ Divinæ particulam auræ. HOR.

and

and a lively hope of ſalvation. What a ſunſhine muſt a mind in ſuch a ſtate enjoy: how different from the gloomineſs of the ſceptic or unbeliever; how ſuperior to the coldneſs of the mere diſputant in ſcholaſtic or ſophiſtical divinity!

With reſpect to the *efficacy of* PRAYER in bringing down the aſſiſtance, the illumination of the Holy Ghoſt, not merely in teaching doctrinal notions, but in the actual conduct of life, let us hear the declaration of LORD CHIEF JUSTICE HALE, whoſe example I ſelect, becauſe he was a layman, a man deeply converſant in the buſineſs of the world, a great lawyer, and therefore may contribute to prove, that they who value themſelves on their worldly ſagacity, and frequently conſider the affairs of religion as trifles, compared with the conteſts for property and the concerns of juriſprudence, need not, in the moſt active life and moſt exalted ſtations, be aſhamed of the Goſpel of Chriſt.

"I can call," ſays he, "my own EX-"PERIENCE to witneſs, that even in the

" external actions, occurrences, and in-
" cidents of my whole life, I was never
" disappointed of the *best guidance* and *di-*
" *rection*, when in humility, and a sense
" of deficiency, and diffidence of my own
" ability to direct myself, or to grapple
" with the difficulties of my life, I have
" *implored* the *secret guidance* of the divine
" Widom and Providence."

SECTION XXII.

Temperance neceſſary to the Reception and Continuance of the Holy Spirit in the Heart, and conſequently to the Evidence of Chriſtianity afforded by Divine Illumination.

THE Apoſtle ſays, *Be not drunk with wine, wherein is exceſs; but be filled with the* SPIRIT *. The word ασωτια in the original, here rendered *exceſs*, correſponds with the Latin *prodigalitas*, which, in the Roman law, characteriſed the ſpendthrift and debauchee, incapable, from his vices, of managing his own affairs, and therefore placed by the prætor under the guardianſhip of truſtees, without whoſe concurrence he could perform no legal act †. He was conſidered as an infant and an idiot. The words of the Apoſtle may

* Eph. v. 18.

† See Dr. Powel's Sermon on the text.

then

then be thus paraphraſed. "Be not intem-
"perate in wine, becauſe intemperance will
"deſtroy your reaſon, and degrade you to
"a ſtate of infantine *imbecility*, without in-
"fantine *innocence*; but be filled with the
"SPIRIT; that is, let your reaſon be exalted,
"purified, clarified to the higheſt ſtate by
"the co-operation of the divine reaſon,
"which cannot be, if you deſtroy the na-
"tural faculties which God has given you,
"by drunkenneſs and gluttony."

I think it evident, from this paſſage, as well as from the concluſions of reaſon, that all exceſs tends to exclude the radiance of grace. The mental eye is weakened by it, and cannot bear the celeſtial luſtre *.

That great maſter of reaſoning, Ariſtotle, maintained that *pleaſures* are cor-

* Ωσπερ οφθαλμω λημωντι, κ᾽ ου κεκαθαρμενω, τα σφοδρα φωτεινα ιδειν ουκ διοντε· ουτω κ᾽ τη ψυχη μη την αρετην κεκτημενη, το της αληθειας ενιπτρισασθαι καλλος. As it is impoſſible for an eye, labouring under a malady which cauſes a defluxion, to ſee clearly any very bright and brilliant object, till the impurity is removed; ſo it is for the mind, unpoſſeſſed of virtue, to reflect the beautiful image of truth.

Hierocles, in Præf. ad Pythag.

ruptive

ruptive of *principles* (φθαρτικαι των αρχων); and many of the ancients were of opinion, that vice diſqualified for philoſophical purſuits, where the object was merely terreſtrial and human, by raiſing a thick cloud round the underſtanding, which the rays of truth could not penetrate. It was for this reaſon that one of them maintained that "*juvenis non eſt idoneus moralis philoſophiæ auditor*;" that though youth is moſt in want of moral inſtruction, yet, from the violence of its paſſions, and its uſual immerſion in ſenſuality, it was the leaſt qualified to *comprehend*, he does not ſay to adopt or follow, but even to *underſtand*, the doctrines of moral philoſophy.

One of our own philoſophers *, who in many reſpects equalled the antients, juſtly obſerves, "That anger, impatience, admiration of perſons, or a puſillanimous over-eſtimation of them, deſire of victory more than of truth, too cloſe an attention to the things of this world, as riches, power, dignities, IMMERSION

* Dr. Henry More.

"OF

" OF THE MIND INTO THE BODY, and the " *ſlaking of that noble and divine fire* * of " the ſoul by intemperance and luxury; " all theſe are very great enemies to all " manner of knowledge, as well natural " as divine."

I therefore earneſtly recommend it to every ſerious man, who wiſhes to be convinced of Chriſtianity, to conſider it in the *morning* †, before either the cares of the world, or the fumes of that intemperance ‡ which conviviality ſometimes occaſions, blunt the feelings of the heart, and ſpread a film over the viſual nerve of the mental eye §.

* *Igneus ille vigor.*

† Thoſe that ſeek me *early* (*manè*) ſhall find me. PROVERBS, viii.

‡ *Si præceptor,* HOMO, *gravatur* homini *diſciplinam humanam committere, puta dialecticen aut arithmeticen, ſomnolento, oſcitanti, aut* crapulâ *gravato; quanto magis* SAPIENTIA CŒLESTIS *dedignabitur loqui voluptatum hujus mundi amore temulentis, cæleſtium rerum neglectu, nauſeantibus?* ERASMUS.

§ *Verùm hæc* impranſus. HOR.

SECTION XXIII.

On improving AFFLICTIONS *duly as a Means of Grace and Belief in the Goſpel.*

A CELEBRATED divine*, on his recovery from a ſevere fit of ſickneſs, is reported to have ſaid, "I have learned, "under this ſickneſs, to KNOW SIN AND "GOD." He had ſtudied divinity, during many years, with great attention; he had prayed and preached with great ardour; yet he acknowledges, that till the affliction of ſickneſs viſited him, he was unacquainted with thoſe important ſubjects, SIN AND GOD; ſubjects which he had ſo frequently conſidered in private, and diſcourſed upon before an admiring audience.

It is good for me that I have been afflicted, ſaid one, who had ſinned egregiouſly in

* Oecolampadius.

his

his proſperous days, and who was rendered wiſe by affliction.

Afflictions, if ſuffered to have their perfect work, will certainly become the means of grace, cauſe belief in the conſolatory goſpel, and ultimately lead to ſalvation. The wandering mind returns, like the prodigal ſon, when under the preſſure of diſtreſs, to the boſom of its father. The kind father goes forth to meet it on its return, and the interview happily terminates in perfect love and reconciliation.

More have been convinced of the truth of Chriſtianity by a ſevere illneſs, a great loſs, a diſappointment *, or the death of one whom the ſoul loved, than by all the *defences*,

* *Le moment de la* GRACE, *c'eſt une humiliation qui Dieu vous envoie, et qui vous* éloigne du monde, *parceque vous n'y pouvez plus paroître avec honneur. C'eſt la diſgrace d'un maître à qui une lâche complaiſance vous faiſoit en mille rencontres ſacrifier les intérêts de votre conſcience ; le changement d'un ami dont le commerce trop fréquent vous entraînoit dans le vice & vous y entretenoit. C'eſt* une perte de biens, une maladie, un chagrin domeſtique, *ou* étranger ; *ce ſont des* ſouffrances ; *tout,* HORS DIEU, *devient* AMER ; *on ne trouve*

defences, proofs, and *apologies* which have ever been produced in the moſt celebrated ſchools of theology. The heart was opened, and rendered ſoft and ſuſceptible by ſorrow, and the dew of divine grace enabled to find its way to the latent ſeeds of Chriſtian virtue.

Such being the beneficial effect of afflictions, it is much to be lamented, that many will not ſuffer them to operate favourably on their diſpoſitions, and thus counteract, by the good they may ultimately produce, the pain which they immediately inflict. They fly from ſolitude, they baniſh reflection. They drink the cup of intoxication, or ſeek the no leſs inebriating draft of diſſipating pleaſure. Thus they loſe one of the moſt favourable opportunities of receiving thoſe divine impreſſions which would give them COMFORT under their afflictions, ſuch as the world cannot

trouve plus de conſolation *que dans* lui; *& rebuté des choſes humaines, on commence à* GOUTER LES CHOSES DU CIEL. BRETONNEAU.

give;

give; and afford them ſuch conviction as would render them Chriſtians indeed, and lead to all thoſe beneficial conſequences of faith, which are plainly repreſented in the ſcripture.

SECTION XXIV.

On Devotion—a Means, as well as an Effect, of Grace—no ſincere Religion can ſubſiſt without it.

MANY theologiſts, who have written with the acuteneſs of an Ariſtotle, and the acrimony of a Juvenal, againſt all ſorts of infidels and heretics, in defence of Chriſtianity, ſeem to have forgotten one very material part of religion—that which conſiſts of devotional ſentiment, and the natural fervors of a ſincere piety. Some of them ſeem to reprobate, and hold them in abhorrence. They inveigh againſt them as enthuſiaſm; they laugh at them as the cant of hypocriſy. Such men have the coldneſs of Biſhop Butler, without the ingenuity; the contentious ſpirit of Dr. Bentley, without the wit or erudition.

True religion cannot exiſt without a conſiderable degree of devotion. On what is true religion founded but on LOVE—the

love of God, and the love of our neighbour? And with reſpect to the love of God, what ſays our Saviour? Thou ſhalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy ſoul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy ſtrength. No language can more expreſsly and emphatically deſcribe the ardour of devotion. Out of the heart the mouth ſpeaketh. If the heart feels the love of God, in the degree which our Saviour requires, the language of prayer and thankſgiving will be always glowing, and, on extraordinary occaſions, even rapturous.

The *effectual* FERVENT *prayer of a righteous man availeth much*: if it be not *fervent*, it cannot be *ſincere*, and therefore cannot be expected to avail. Love muſt add wings to prayer, to waft it to the throne of grace.

"Man has a principle of love implanted "in his nature, a *magnetiſm* of paſſion*," by which he conſtantly attaches himſelf to

* Norris.

that

that which appears to him good and beautiful; and what ſo good, what ſo beautiful, as the archetype and model of all excellence? Shall he conceive the image, and not be charmed with its lovelineſs?

Worſhip or adoration implies lively affection. If it be cold, it is a mere mockery, a formal compliance with cuſtoms for the ſake of decency. It is a lip-ſervice, of which knaves, hypocrites, and infidels are capable, and which they render, for the ſake of temporal advantage.

Will any man condemn the ardour which the ſcriptures themſelves exhibit? Muſt they not be allowed to afford a model for imitation? And are they written in the cold, dull ſtyle of an academical profeſſor, lecturing in the ſchools of divinity? No; they are written in warm, animated, metaphorical, and poetical language; not with the preciſion of the ſchoolmen; not with the dryneſs of ſyſtem-makers; but with florid, rhetorical, impaſſioned appeals to the feelings and imagination. What are

PSALMS, but the ebullitions of paſſion, ſorrow, joy, love, and gratitude?

The truth is, that the moſt important ſubject which can be conſidered by man, muſt, if conſidered with ſerioufneſs and ſincerity, excite a warm intereſt. The fire of devotion may not, indeed, be equably ſupported, becauſe ſuch equability is not conſiſtent with the conſtitution of human nature; but it will, for the moſt part, burn with a clear and ſteady flame, and will certainly, at no time, and in no circumſtances, be utterly extinguiſhed.

Where the heart is deeply intereſted, there will be eagerneſs and agitation. Suppoſe a man, who ſpeaks, in the church, of the Holy Ghoſt, and other moſt important religious ſubjects, with perfect *ſang froid*, repairing to the Stock-exchange, and juſt going to make a purchaſe. The price fluctuates. Obſerve how he liſtens to his broker's reports. His cheeks redden, and his eyes ſparkle. Here he is in earneſt. Nature betrays his emotion. It is not uncharitable to conclude that his heart

heart is literally with his treaſure; and that with reſpect to the riches of divine grace, he values them little; and, like Gallio, *careth for none of theſe things.* View him again, at a great man's levee, and ſee with what awe he eyes a patron. His attention approaches to adoration. He is tremblingly ſolicitous to pleaſe, and would undergo any painful reſtraint, rather than give the ſlighteſt offence. The world will not condemn, but applaud his anxiety; yet, if he is earneſt and fervent, when his intereſt is infinitely greater, in ſecuring the tranquillity of his mind, under all the changes and chances of life, he is deſpiſed as an enthuſiaſt, a bigot, a fool, or a madman.

A man of ſenſe and true goodneſs will certainly take care not to make an oſtentation of his devotional feelings; but at the ſame time he will beware of ſuppreſſing, in his endeavour to moderate and conceal them.

He will never forget, that the ſame ſun which emits light, gives, at the ſame time, a genial heat, that enlivens and cheriſhes all nature.

SECTION XXV.

On Divine Attraction.

SHALL we believe our Saviour himſelf, or ſome poor mortal, who has learned a little Greek, Latin, or Hebrew, and upon the ſtrength of his ſcanty knowledge of thoſe languages, and a little verbal criticiſm, picked up in the ſchools of an univerſity, aſſumes the pen of a Controverſialiſt, and denies the evident meaning of words plainly and emphatically ſpoken by Jeſus Chriſt? Our Saviour ſays, in language particularly direct, "No man "can come unto me, except the Father, "which hath ſent me, DRAW HIM."

Fauſtus Regienſis, Wolzogenius, Brenius, Slichtingius, Sykes, Whitby, Clarke, and many others, endeavour to explain away the meaning of the word DRAW, (ελκυση,) becauſe they have taken a ſide in the

the polemics of Theology, againſt the doctrine of Divine Grace.

But what have we to do with Fauſtus, Wolzogenius, Slichtingius, and the reſt, when we have before us the words of JESUS CHRIST? By them it appears that there is an ATTRACTION in the ſpiritual world, as well as the natural; and that the Spirit of God, a benign philanthropic Spirit, unites itſelf to the ſoul of man, and communicates to it comfort, ſanctity, and illumination.

Men do not controvert the received ſyſtems of natural philoſophy. They believe in the *attraction* of gravitation, coheſion, magnetiſm, and electricity. But in this there is no *viſible* agency, no *ſenſible* efflux, influx, or impulſe. Yet they believe it, and certainly with reaſon; but why ſhould they think that God acts thus on *matter*, comparatively vile, and leaves MIND uninfluenced? *Mind*, that pure, etherial eſſence, which muſt be ſaid to approach in its nature to Divinity, (if man can conceive any thing of divine,) and which has an inborn tendency to aſſimilate with its like.

God, we are told in ſcripture, is love. But love always attaches itſelf to its object. It is not compatible with love to be ſelfiſh and ſolitary. It delights in aſſimilation. The ſpirit of that God who is love, ſtill unites itſelf with man, for whom it has already ſhewn ſo much affectionate regard, in the creation and redemption. It could not be conſiſtent with the love and mercy of God to man, to leave him entirely, for ages, without any intercourſe, any light, any communication, but a *written* WORD, in a language unknown, unread by many, and which, without Divine interpoſition, might be corrupted by the wickedneſs of man, or loſt by his negligence. God's Spirit, acting upon the ſoul of man, at this hour and for ever, is a LIVING, ENERGETIC, AND EVERLASTING GOSPEL. The promiſe of God's aſſiſtance by his Spirit, (as St. Peter aſſured the firſt converts to Chriſtianity,) was unto them, and unto their children, and to all that WERE AFAR OFF *, their ſucceſſors to the remoteſt

* Acts, ii. 39.

ages,

ages, *even to as many as the Lord their God ſhould call.*

Man muſt be ATTRACTED to God by the ſpirit of love in the Divine nature, or elſe he ceaſes to be in the Chriſtian ſyſtem; and what may be the conſequence to the ſoul in its aberration, is known only to him who knoweth all things. But ſurely every thinking mortal will gladly follow the Divine attraction, ſince it gradually draws him from this low vale, where ſin and ſorrow abound, up to the realms of bliſs eternal; and affords him, during his earthly pilgrimage, the ſweeteſt ſolace.

The human ſoul aſſimilating with the Divine, is the drop of water gravitating to the ocean, from which it was originally ſeparated; and cohering with it as ſoon as it comes within the ſphere of its attraction; it is the child clinging to the boſom of its parent; it is the wandering, weary exile haſtening with joy to his native home. Let us endeavour to cheriſh an inclination for re-union; let us follow all the known means of accompliſhing it, and it will be

finally and completely effected by the Holy Ghoſt, the ſpirit of love *.

* Let us hear a Heathen philoſopher ſpeak on the union between God and good men.

Inter bonos viros ac Deum, amicitia eſt, conciliante virtute; amicitiam dico? etiam neceſſitudo et ſimilitudo.

SENECA.

SECTION XXVI.

On the Difficulties of the Scripture.

In his ſolis literis et quod non aſſequor, tamen adoro. ERASMUS.

IF there is any thing in human affairs to be approached with awe, and viewed with veneration, it is the WRITTEN WORD of revelation. Acknowledged ſanctity and long duration combine to throw an air of divinity around it. It is worthy to be kept in the holy of holies. But I cannot agree with thoſe zealous votaries who pretend either that there are no difficulties in it, or that they are all removable by the light of learning. I confeſs that criticiſm has removed many difficulties; but I am convinced that many ſtill remain, which, I fear, will never give way to human ſagacity. There they muſt remain, with all the majeſty of clouds and darkneſs

around them, till the ſun of righteouſneſs ſhall appear in his full glory.

But ſhall difficulties cauſe diſbelief? Are there then no difficulties in nature, as well as in the words of grace? I cannot ſtep into the garden or the meadow; I cannot caſt my eyes to the horizon, without encountering difficulties. Yet I believe the exiſtence of the things I ſee there, and I am led from the obſervation of general good, mixed with partial evil, to conclude, that verily there is a God. I conclude in the ſame manner, from what I *do* underſtand and *know* to be good in the goſpel, that verily Jeſus is the Chriſt; and that the parts of the goſpel which I do not comprehend, are good, becauſe thoſe which I am able to underſtand are ſo beyond all doubt and compariſon.

All that is neceſſary to my happineſs in the goſpel is ſufficiently clear. I learn there that the HOLY GHOST is vouchſafed to me and to all men, now and till time ſhall be no more. This I conſider as the LIVING GOSPEL. This ſupplies all de-

fects,

ſects, if any there ſhould be, in the written word; and the dark and unintelligible parts of the goſpel, ſurrounded by celeſtial radiance, become like ſpots in the ſun, which neither deform its beauty, nor diminiſh its luſtre. I regard them not therefore; I bow to them with reverence, as to ſacred things upon the altar, covered with a veil from the eyes of mortal or profane intruſion. It is enough that I have learned, in the goſpel, many moral truths; and this one great truth, that *God Almighty*, at *this moment*, pours an EMANATION of himſelf into the ſouls of all who ſeek the glorious gift by fervent prayer, and endeavour to retain it by obedience to his will. It is enough: why need I perplex my underſtanding with ſearching into thoſe *ſecret things which belong unto the Lord*; or acquire a minute, cavilling habit, which never can diſcover any thing of more importance than that which I already know; but which, if indulged preſumptuouſly, may lead me to ſcepticiſm,

and

and terminate in infidelity? Some parts of the holy volume are ſealed: I will not attempt to burſt it open; or vainly conjecture what theſe parts conceal. I will wait with patience and humility for God's good time. In the mean time I will *rejoice*; and my fleſh ſhall reſt in hope; becauſe I have been admitted to inſpect the book, and have learned that the SPIRIT ſtill attends the *written word*, miniſtering at this hour, and illuminating, with the lamp of Heaven, whatever darkneſs overſhadows the path of life.

This perſuaſion adds new glory to the *written* goſpel. It throws a heavenly luſtre over the page. It is not left *alone* to effect the great purpoſe of men's recovery; ſo that whatever difficulties or defects it may be allowed to retain, by the wiſe providence of God, the difficulties will be removed, and the defects ſupplied, ſo far as to accompliſh the *great end*, by the operation of the Holy Ghoſt, which accompanies it in its progreſs down the ſtream

ſtream of time, like the pillar of fire, attending the children of Iſrael *.

* Οσοι υιοι εἰσι του φωτος ϗ της διακονιας της καινης διαθηκης εν τω πνειματι αγιω, ΘΕΟΔΙΔΑΚΤΟΙ ΕΙΣΙΝ· αυτη γαρ η χαρις επιγραφει εν ταίς καρδιαις αυτων τους νομους του πνευμαῖος· ουκ οφειλουσιν ουν εις τας γραφας μονον τας δια μελανος γεγραμμενας πληροφορειθαι, αλλα ϗ εις τας πλακας της καρδιας η χαρις του Θεου εγγραφει τους νομους του πνευμαῖος ϗ τα επουρανια μυστηρια.—As many as are the ſons of the light, and of the miniſtration of the New Teſtament in the holy Spirit, are *taught of God*; for grace itſelf inſcribes upon their hearts the laws of the Spirit. They are not therefore indebted to the SCRIPTURES ONLY, the word written with INK, for their Chriſtian perfection; but the grace of God writes upon the tablet of their hearts the laws of the Spirit, and the myſteries of Heaven.

MACARIUS in Homil. 15.

SECTION XXVII.

The OMNIPRESENCE *of God a Doctrine univerſally allowed; but how is God every where preſent but by his Spirit, which is the* HOLY GHOST?

Ουδεν Θεων κενον.
Nothing is without Deity.
MARC ANTONIN.

THEY who maintain, if there be any ſuch, that God having, about *eighteen hundred* years ago, ſignified his will to mankind, has ever ſince that time withdrawn his agency from the human mind, do, in effect, deny the *omnipreſence*, and with it the omniſcience, providence, and goodneſs of the Deity. But what ſay the ſcriptures? HE IS NOT FAR FROM EVERY ONE OF US; FOR IN HIM WE LIVE, AND MOVE, AND HAVE OUR BEING *.

* Acts, xvii. 27.

But

But is it to believed, that when he is thus *intimately* preſent with us, he either cannot, or will not, influence our ſentiments? Why is he thus preſent? or why ſhould he confine his agency over us to a LITTLE BOOK, in a foreign and dead language, which many never ſee at all, which more cannot read, and which few can perfectly underſtand; and concerning the literal meaning of the moſt important DOCTRINAL parts of which, the moſt learned and judicious are to this hour divided in opinion?

The heathens * had more enlarged and worthier ideas of the divine nature. They indeed believed in *ſupernatural agency* on

* *Ipſe* Deus HUMANO GENERI *miniſtrat; ubique et omnibus præſto eſt.*— God himſelf adminiſters to the human race; he is preſent every where, and to every man. SENECA EPIST.

Quocunque te flexeris, ibi illum videbis occurrentem tibi. Nihil ab illo vacat. Opus ſuum ipſe implet.— Whichever way you turn, you will meet God. Nothing is without him. He fills his own work completely. SENEC. DE BENEFIC. Lib. 4. Cap. 8.

the

the mind of man; though they diſgraced their belief by the abſurdities of polytheiſm. Every part of the univerſe was peopled by them, with ſupernatural agents, and the moſt diſtinguiſhed among them believed their virtuous ſentiments *inſpired*, and their good actions *directed* by a tutelar deity. I dwell not upon the inſtance of Socrates's Demon *; and I only mention the topic, to

* It is worth while, however, to inſert the following fine paſſage from Plato, in which Socrates aſſerts the neceſſity of *ſupernatural agency*, in removing a dark CLOUD from the human mind, previouſly to its being able to learn how to regulate conduct, either towards gods or men. Reaſon, till this dark cloud ſhould be removed by divine Providence, he thought incapable of diſcovering either moral or divine truth with certainty.

S. Ἀναγκαῖόν ἔστι περιμένειν ἕως ἄν τις μάθη ὡς δεῖ πρὸς θεοὺς καὶ πρὸς ἀνθρώπους διακεῖσθαι. A. Πότε ἂν παρέσται ὁ χρόνος οὗτος, ὦ Σώκρατες; καὶ τίς ὁ παιδεύσων;— ΣΩΚΡ. Οὗτός ἐστιν ᾧ μέλει περὶ σοῦ. ἀλλὰ δοκεῖ μοι, ὥσπερ τῷ Διομήδει φησὶ τὴν Ἀθηνᾶν Ὅμηρος ἀπὸ τῶν ὀφθαλμῶν ἀφελεῖν τὴν ἈΚΛΥΝ,

Ὄφρ' ἔυ γιγνώσκοι ἠμὲν θεὸν ἠδὲ καὶ ἄνδρα,

οὕτω καὶ σοὶ δεῖν ἀπὸ τῆς ψυχῆς πρῶτον ἀφελόντα τὴν ἈΚΛΥΝ, ἣ νῦν παρεῦσα τυγχάνει, τηλικαῦτ' ἤδη προσφέρειν δι' ὧν μέλλεις γιώσεσθαι

to prove that the doctrine is not likely to be very UNREASONABLE, ſince it was maintained by men who are acknowledged to have been ſingularly endowed with the rational faculty.

The omnipotence, omnipreſence, and omniſcience of God were ſtrenuouſly

γνώσεσθαι ἡμὲν "κακὸν ηδὲ κ᾽ ἐσθλὸν·" νῦν μὲν γὰρ ἂκ ἐν μοι δοκῇς δυνηθεῖναι. Platonis Alcibiades II. *prope Finem.*——*(Socrates and Alcibiades diſcourſe.)* S. It is neceſſary then to wait till one is informed how one ought to behave, both in *religious* and *ſocial* duties, to God and to men.—A. O Socrates, when will that time come, and who ſhall teach me?—S. EVEN HE WHO CARETH FOR YOU; but it appears to me, as Homer repreſents Minerva removing a dark cloud from the eyes of Diomed, that he might diſtinguiſh gods from men in the battle, ſo he who CARETH FOR YOU muſt firſt remove the dark cloud from your mind, which now hangs over it, and then you will uſe thoſe means by which you may know "the *good from* "*ill*," which, in your preſent ſtate, you ſeem to me *unable* to diſtinguiſh.

The philoſopher ſeems to have ſeen the neceſſity of divine revelation, and to have predicted the illumination of the Spirit of God.

maintained,

maintained, not only by the wiſeſt of the heathens, but the moſt learned and rational of chriſtian divines; among whom was Dr. Samuel Clarke, a man by conſtitution and ſtudies as far removed from enthuſiaſm, as it is poſſible to conceive. But the *omnipreſence* of God being allowed as a true doctrine, it will not be difficult to believe his agency on the human mind by ſupernatural impreſſion. The difficulty would be to believe that the divine Spirit could be PRESENT always and every where with us, and yet never act upon us, but leave the moral world, after the writing of the New Teſtament, to depend on the fidelity of *tranſlations*, the interpretations of fallible men, the preaching and teaching of ſcholars, deriving all they know from *dictionaries*, and differing continually even on ſuch doctrines as conſtitute the very corner-ſtones of the whole fabric.

The doctrine of God's total inaction, in the moral and intellectual world, is irreligious

gious and unphiloſophical. The wiſeſt heathens exploded it. Fortunately it is refuted in the ſtrongeſt language of ſcripture. For *after* our Saviour's aſcenſion, the Holy Spirit was expreſsly promiſed, and the MINISTRATION of the Spirit, co-operating on the heart of man with the written word, is to continue its energy, as it does at this hour, to the end of time.

The ſpirit of God is every where preſent, like the air which we inhale. It is no leſs neceſſary to intellectual life, than the air to animal. There is a remarkable paſſage, appoſite to the preſent ſubject, in the meditations of Antoninus, which I ſhall give in the tranſlation of Collier, and as it is quoted by Delany.

" Let your ſoul," ſays the philoſopher, " receive the Deity, as your blood does " the air; for the influences of the one " are no leſs vital than the other. This " correſpondence is very practicable; for " there is *an ambient* OMNIPRESENT *ſpirit*, " which lies as open and pervious to your " mind,

" mind, as the air you breathe does to your " lungs. But then you muſtremember to "be diſpoſed to draw it.

" If," continues Dr. Delany, " this " gracious *gift of Heaven* ſhould be de- " nied, becauſe it is not found to dwell " with the wicked, I anſwer, that men " may as well deny the exiſtence of the " DEW, becauſe it is not often found upon " clods and filth, nor even upon graſs, " trampled with polluted feet.

" Let the grace of God be conſidered " as having ſome analogy, ſome reſem- " blance to the DEW OF HEAVEN; the " dew of Heaven, which falls alike upon " all objects below it, as the grace of " God doth upon all mankind, but reſteth " not upon things defiled. Purity abideth " not with pollution."

There is an elemental fire, the electrical fluid, diffuſed through all nature. Though unſeen, its energy is mighty. So alſo the *Divine Spirit* actuates the intellectual word, omnipreſent, irreſiſtible, inviſible.

SECTION XXVIII.

The Want of Faith could not be criminal, *if it depended only on the Underſtanding; but Faith is a* Virtue, *becauſe it originates from virtuous Diſpoſitions favoured by the Holy Spirit.*

FAITH is always required and repreſented in the goſpel as a *moral virtue.* This alone eſtabliſhes the doctrine of this book, that faith, or the evidence of the Chriſtian religion, ariſes from *obedience* to its laws. There could be no virtue in faith, if it were produced in the mind by *demonſtrative* proofs, ſuch as many apologiſts for Chriſtianity have endeavoured to diſplay. But there is great virtue in OBEDIENCE to the moral precepts of the goſpel. The heart muſt be *well inclined* that endeavours to learn and perform its duty from the dictates of the goſpel, notwithſtanding the doubts or diſbelief which may

occaſionally ariſe in the underſtanding concerning the divine original of ſo excellent a rule of morality. Such an inclination draws down upon it the favour of God, and conſequently the illumination of the Holy Ghoſt. The doubts and diſbelief are gradually removed. A life of piety and good morals is the never-failing reſult. And thus faith both begins and ends in virtue.

" The reaſon," ſays Dr. Clarke, " why " faith (which is generally looked upon " as an act of underſtanding, and ſo not " in our power) in the New Teſtament is " always inſiſted upon as a moral virtue, " is, becauſe faith, in the ſcripture ſenſe, " is not barely an act of the underſtand- " ing, but a mixed act of the will alſo, " conſiſting very much in that ſimplicity " and unprejudicedneſs of mind, which " our Saviour calls receiving the king- " dom of God, as a little child, in that " freedom from guile and deceit, which " was the character of Nathaniel, an " Iſraelite indeed; and in that teachable

" diſpoſition, and deſire to know the will
" of God, for which the Beræans were ſo
" highly commended, *who ſearched the*
" *ſcriptures daily, whether theſe things*
" *were true.*"

This ſimple, teachable, unprejudiced ſtate of mind is in itſelf amiable. It is pleaſing both to God and good men. It is eſteemed even by the wicked. It is preciſely the ſtate in which the Holy Spirit delights, and with which he will make his abode, bringing with him comfort and illumination. To uſe the poet's words;

" ——He muſt delight in virtue;
" And that which he delights in muſt be happy."

If indeed it were a *moral virtue* merely to *believe* a narrative on the credibility of the narrators, or the probability of the circumſtances, then would it be a moral virtue to believe a well-authenticated news-paper. But to believe the goſpel requires purity and piety of heart, thoſe lovely qualities which the imagination conceives characteriſtic of the angelic nature. It implies a diſpoſition which

delights in devotion to God, and beneficence to man; a diſpoſition cheerful, tranquil, and which enjoys every innocent ſatisfaction of this life, ſweetened with the hope, that when the ſun ſets, it will riſe in new and additional ſplendor. Faith, accompanied with hope and charity, conſtitutes the true Chriſtian; a *living image* of virtue, and forming that beautiful model which the philoſopher wiſhed, but deſpaired to ſee; TRUTH EMBODIED, VIRTUE PERSONIFIED, walking forth among the ſons of men, and exciting, by its conſpicuous lovelineſs, an univerſal deſire of imitation.

SECTION XXIX.

Of the ſcriptural word "UNCTION;" *its high myſterious Meaning.*

THE very title of our Saviour (משיח and ΧΡΙΣΤΟΣ) is the ANOINTED; and the operation of the Holy Ghoſt is called in the ſacred ſcriptures (ΧΡΙΣΜΑ) UNCTION. This idea of the CHRISMA pervades the whole doctrine of grace.

"The anointing with oil," ſays Hammond, "denoted, among the Jews, the "preferring one before another, (and the "*Targum* generally renders it by a word "which ſignifies preferring or advancing,) "and ſo became the ceremony of CONSE-"CRATING to any ſpecial office, and was "uſed in the inſtalling men to places of "any eminence."

The word *Chriſma*, or unction, was hence aſſumed to ſignify the act of the

Holy Ghoſt, in CONSECRATING thoſe who are favoured by divine grace. The conſequence of this UNCTION is illumination; for St. John ſays, "Ye *have* an UNCTION "from the Holy One, (the Holy Ghoſt,) "and ye (in conſequence) KNOW ALL "THINGS *;" that is, all things that concern the nature and EVIDENCE of CHRIST's religion. Again he ſays, "The anointing "which ye have received of HIM (the "Holy Ghoſt) abideth in you; and ye "need not that any MAN teach you; but "as the ſame ANOINTING teacheth you "all things, and is truth, and is no lie; "even as it has taught you, ye ſhall abide "in him †."

The idea of the CHRISMA, I repeat, or *unction* ‡, pervades the whole doctrine of divine grace. It gives a name to him who brought down the great gift of the Spirit, and who himſelf had the hallowed

* 1 John, ii. 20. † Ibid. 27.

‡ *Dieu fait couler dans l'ame je ne ſçais quelle* ONCTION, *qui la remplit.* BRETONNEAU.

UNCTION

UNCTION *without meaſure* *; for what is ſignified by CHRIST, but the *Anointed* †?

I have introduced theſe obſervations on the name of CHRIST, partly with a view to expoſe the falſe learning of a *French philoſopher*, who has attacked Chriſtianity with ſingular artifice. The celebrated Mr. Volney affirms, that Chriſtianity is but the allegorical worſhip of the SUN—a mere mode of oriental ſuperſtition, under the cabaliſtical names of CHRISEN or CHRIST, the etymology of which, according to him, has no reference to the CHRISMA, UNCTION, but to CHRIS, an aſtrological name among the Indians for the SUN, and ſignifying *conſervator*; "whence," ſays he, "the Hindoo god, "Chriſen, or Chriſtna, and the Chriſtian "CHRISTOS, the ſon of Mary." Many of the French philoſophers, and perhaps Volney, are unacquainted with *Greek*.

But I hope the chriſtian ſcholar will never give up the Greek etymology of the word CHRIST, evidently a tranſlation of

* John, iii. 34. † κατ' ἐξοχην.

the Hebrew *Meſſiah*; nor the ſublime and myſterious doctrine which it leads to, the metaphorical *anointing* of the Holy Ghoſt, the ſanctifying, conſecrating, purifying influence of divine grace *.

* Mr. Volney further ſays, that "YESUS, or "Jeſus, was an antient name given to young Bac-"chus, the clandeſtine ſon of the virgin, Minerva, "who, in the whole hiſtory of his life, and even in his "death, calls to mind the hiſtory of the God of the "Chriſtians; that is, the STAR OF THE DAY, of "which they are both of them EMBLEMS." Let us avoid the folly of *fanciful learning*; and ſay rather that the *Star of the Day* is an EMBLEM of JESUS CHRIST, glorioufly enlightening, and vitally warming, by his influence, the INTELLECTUAL ſyſtem.

SECTION XXX.

On what is called by devout Perſons EXPERIENCE *in Religion.*

THERE is a peace of God, which paſſeth all underſtanding, and baffles all power of deſcription. The flavour of a peach or a pine-apple is delightful to the palate, but words can give no idea of it to him who has never taſted them. There is a fragrance in a roſe, which, while the nerves perceive it with complacency, cannot be communicated, in the ſlighteſt degree, by language. Such alſo is the heavenly manna; and he who would form a juſt notion of its exquiſite ſweetneſs, muſt taſte it. No learning, not even the argumentative ſkill of an Ariſtotle, can afford him the leaſt idea of it, without actual ſenſation.

" Were I to define divinity," (ſays the admirable author of Select Diſcourſes,) " I ſhould rather call it a divine life,

" than * a divine ſcience; it being ſome-
" thing rather to be underſtood by a ſpi-
" ritual ſenſation, than by any verbal de-
" ſcription.

" Divinity is a true efflux from the eter-
" nal light, which, like the ſun-beams,
" does not only enlighten, but heat
" and enliven. The knowledge of divi-
" nity that appears in ſyſtems is but a poor
" wax-light; but the powerful ENERGY
" of divine knowledge diſplays itſelf in
" *purified ſouls*, the true Πεδιον Αληθειας †.

" To ſeek our divinity merely in books
" and writings, is to ſeek the living
" among the dead. We do but in vain
" ſeek God, many times, in theſe, where
" his truth too often is not ſo much en-
" ſhrined as intombed. No; *intra te*
" *quære Deum*; ſeek for God within thine
" own ſoul. He is beſt diſcerned ‡ νοερᾳ
" επαφῃ, by an *intellectual feeling*. Εστι δε
" ψυχης αισθησις τις, *the ſoul itſelf has a*
" *certain feeling*.

* Biſhop Taylor and Mr. Smith coincide here, not only in ſentiment, but expreſſion.

† The ſoil in which TRUTH grows and flouriſhes.

‡ Plotinus.

" The

" The reaſon why, notwithſtanding all
" our acute reaſonings and ſubtile purſuits,
" truth prevails no more in the world, is,
" that we ſo often disjoin truth and good-
" neſs, which of themſelves can never be
" diſunited.

" There is a *knowing of the truth as it*
" *is in Jeſus*; as it is in a Chriſt-like na-
" ture; as it is in that ſweet, mild, hum-
" ble, and loving ſpirit of Jeſus, which
" ſpreads itſelf, like a morning ſun, upon
" the ſouls of good men, full of light and
" life. There is an inward beauty, life,
" and lovelineſs in divine truth, which
" cannot be known, but only when it is
" digeſted into life and practice.

" Our Saviour, the great maſter of di-
" vine truth, would not, while he was
" here on earth, draw it up into a *ſyſtem*
" or body, nor would his diſciples after
" him: he would not lay it out to us in
" any *canons* or articles of belief, not
" being ſo careful to ſtock and enrich the
" world with opinions, as with true piety,
" and a godlike pattern of purity, as the
" beſt way to thrive in all ſpiritual under-

" ſtanding. His main ſcope was to pro-
" mote a holy life, as the beſt and moſt
" compendious way to a right belief. He
" hangs all true acquaintance with divinity
" upon the doing God's will. If any man
" will do his will, he ſhall know of the
" doctrine, whether it be of God. This
" is that alone which will make us, as St.
" Peter tells us, that we ſhall not be bar-
" ren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of
" our Lord and Saviour.

" There is an inward ſweetneſs and de-
" liciouſneſs in divine truth, which no ſen-
" ſual mind can taſte or reliſh. The
" ψυχικος ανηρ, the *natural man ſavours* not
" the things of God. Corrupt paſſions
" and terrene affections are apt, of their
" own nature, to diſturb all ſerene
" thoughts, to precipitate our judgments,
" and warp our underſtandings. It was a
" good maxim of the old Jewiſh writers,
" that the Holy Spirit* dwells not in

* " רוח הקדש לא שרה בעצב ולא בכעש."

The RUACH HAKKODESH, *or Spirit of Holineſs, dwells not with turbulent and angry tempers.*

" *earthly*

" *earthly paſſions.* Divinity is not ſo well
" perceived by a ſubtile wit, ωσπερ αισθησει
" κεκαθαρμενη, as by pure ſenſation."

" He that will find truth, muſt ſeek it
" with a free judgment, and a SANCTIFIED
" mind: he that *thus* ſeeks, ſhall find: he
" ſhall live in truth, and truth ſhall live
" in him: it ſhall be like a ſtream of
" living waters iſſuing out of his *own*
" ſoul: he ſhall drink of the waters of his
" own ciſtern, and be ſatisfied: he ſhall
" every morning find this heavenly MAN-
" NA lying upon his ſoul, and be fed with
" it to eternal life. He will find *ſatisfac-*
" *tion* within, FEELING himſelf in con-
" junction with truth, though all the
" world ſhould DISPUTE againſt him."

Thus the heart of a good man will *experience* the moſt pleaſurable ſenſations, when he finds, and find it he will, the *pearl of great price*, the living *energetic* goſpel, lodged, by divine grace, in the ſanctuary of his boſom. He will *be filled with all joy in believing*; and thus EXPERIENCING the efficacy of the Chriſtian religion, he

can entertain no doubt of its truth, its divine original. The *real* difficulties and obſcurities of the ſcriptures give him little trouble, much leſs the cavils of ſceptics. He has the *witneſs in himſelf* *, that the goſpel is *the word of God*, the *incorruptible ſeed* † of holineſs, and ſuch felicity as the world never gave, and cannot take away. He cannot adequately deſcribe his ‡ ſtate. It is an UNSPEAKABLE *gift*. He feels it; and is grateful.

The excellent Norris, after having ſpent many years in the uſual ſtudies of academics, in logic, metaphyſics, and other, what he calls, unconcerning curioſities, comes to the following reſolution:

" I think," ſays he, " I ſhall now " chiefly apply myſelf to the reading of " ſuch books as are rather *perſuaſive* than

* 1 John, v. 10.

† 1 Pet. i. 23.

‡ THOMAS A KEMPIS thus attempts to deſcribe the happy ſtate, imperfectly indeed, but devoutly: " *Frequens Chriſti viſitatio cum homine interno, dulcis* " *ſermocinatio, grata conſolatio, multa pax,*" &c.

" *inſtructive*; ſuch as are *ſapid*, pathetic,
" and divinely reliſhing; ſuch as warm,
" kindle, and enlarge the interior, and
" awaken *the divine ſenſe* (or feeling) of
" the ſoul; as conſidering with myſelf,
" that I have now, after ſo much reading
" and ſpeculation, more need of HEAT
" than of *light*. Though if I were for
" more light ſtill, I think *this would*
" *prove the beſt method of illumina-*
" *tion*; and when all is done, the love of
" God is the beſt light of the ſoul. For
" I conſider, with the excellent CARDI-
" NAL BONA, that a man may have
" knowledge without love; but he that
" loves, although he wants ſciences, hu-
" manly acquired, yet he will know more
" than human wiſdom can teach him, be-
" cauſe he has that maſter *within him*, who
" teaches man knowledge *."

If other ſtudents and teachers were to follow his example in this inſtance, there would be much more true devotion and ſincere piety in the world; and few would be

* Via *Compend. ad Deum.*

infidels,

infidels, except among the desperately profligate, who harden their hearts, and cloud their understandings by habitual vice and intemperance; who *fear* Christianity should be true, and therefore, with fool-hardy presumption, resolve to deny it.

SECTION XXXI.

On the Seaſons of Grace.

THERE are times when the mind ſeems ſenſible of a peculiar ſerenity; the underſtanding is clear to diſcern ſpiritual things, and the heart glows with ſentiments of Chriſtian piety and general benevolence. At thoſe times, man appears to be exalted above the common level of mortality. All pure, all peace, all love, all joy, his nature endeavours to ſoar above the earth, and to reach the ſource of all excellence. A ſweet complacency, in thoſe moments, diffuſes itſelf over the ſoul, and an internal ſatisfaction is experienced, which no language can deſcribe; but which renders him who feels it as happy as it is poſſible to become in a ſublunary exiſtence.

Theſe are the halcyon times which may be termed the ſeaſons of grace; the ſeaſons, when the God of mercy, compaſſion-

ating the weary pilgrim, ſends down the cup of comfort to exhilarate and reward him; diſplays the lamp of heaven, to illuminate his path as he travels in the valley.

Theſe favours, as I firmly believe, are offered to all the ſons of Adam who do not preſumptuouſly and repeatedly and knowingly offend the donor; for that man may *grieve* the Spirit and *quench* the Spirit, we are told in the ſtrong language of ſcripture.

But a proper reception of this divine benefit will ſecure its frequency and continuance. Our own endeavours muſt be exerted with vigilance and conſtancy, to preſerve the *divine frame of mind* which it may have produced. Nothing can effect this but the avoidance of habitual vice and impurity, and the practice of virtue. But if, after all, there ſhould be ſeaſons of inſenſibility and coldneſs, it muſt not be concluded that the ſpiritual aſſiſtance is withdrawn in diſpleaſure. For even in the darkeſt valley, an unſeen hand can ſupport and guide the pilgrim in his progreſs; and after the clouds

ſhall

ſhall have prevailed their time, the ſun will break forth with all its warmth and luſtre.

It appears to me to be the firſt object of CHRISTIAN PHILOSOPHY to ſecure the duration and frequent recurrence of the ſeaſons of grace. In order to accompliſh this end, whatever conduces to the moral improvement of the heart muſt be purſued with ardour. The fine morality, diſcovered by the light of nature and the feelings of the heart, probably aſſiſted, among the heathens, by divine interpoſition, may and ought to be called in to add ſomething to the work of Chriſtian improvement; for the beſt heathen ETHICS are founded on truth, and therefore immutably valuable. A ſtate of grace without morality, I firmly believe, is not permitted by him who is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity.

But the man who is bleſſed with the viſitations of the divine Spirit, feels his heart ſpontaneouſly inclined to every thing that is lovely and of good report. Virtue appears to him amiable, and eaſy to be practiſed; and vice diſguſtful, at once the pollution and the miſery

misery of his nature. All the angry passions subside in him; the gentle and benevolent affections grow in their place, and man becomes what he was before the lapse of Adam, and what the gospel revelation was designed to render him, a being little lower than the angels.

SECTION XXXII.

Of miſtaking the Effects of Imagination for the Seaſons of Grace.

THERE are many who will ſcarcely allow the exiſtence of any thing which they cannot ſubject to the notice of the ſenſes. They muſt literally ſee the truth of every thing which requires their aſſent, or they will doubt its reality. To them, whatever is ſaid on the ſubject of a ſpiritual world, or an inviſible agency on the ſoul of man, appears to be the effuſion of fancy, and the ſick man's dream.

And indeed the experience of mankind juſtifies great caution in diſtinguiſhing between the actual operation of the Holy Spirit, and the delirious effects of a too lively imagination. The imagination, heated by the devotional flame, has often kindled a deſtructive fire. It is indeed the parent of fanaticiſm, in all its extremities, and all its evil

evil conſequences. As, therefore, the real agency of the Holy Spirit is to be invited and cheriſhed, ſo the mere imagination of it is to be moſt ſtudiouſly avoided.

That the whole doctrine is not imaginary, is evident to him who reads and believes the goſpel. Such operations are there plainly ſpoken of and promiſed as the greateſt bleſſings to the human race. Their effects are deſcribed as great and ſudden, in affording both comfort, holineſs, and illumination.

The reality of ſeaſons of grace cannot be queſtioned but by him who at the ſame time queſtions the whole ſyſtem of revelation. And a rational man, it is to be believed, will find no difficulty in ſatisfying himſelf that he is not deluded by his imagination, when he feels himſelf particularly virtuous, pure, benevolent, and open to celeſtial influence.

But as all men are not governed by reaſon, and none are governed by it uniformly, it certainly is probable that the deluſions of imagination may often be miſtaken for

ſuper-

ſupernatural aſſiſtance. A few cautionary ſuggeſtions on the ſubject may not, therefore, be ſuperfluous.

Since it is poſſible that the beſt-intentioned may be thus deluded, let every man try his ſpirit by the fruits it produces; not by a ſudden or momentary fruit, but by the frequency and abundance of its productions. If it *habitually* produces peace, joy, purity, piety, and benevolence, let no man attribute it to his imagination; but give the glory to God, and be grateful.

But if it diſplay itſelf in pride, ſelf-conceit, and contempt of others, in acts of violence, in diſturbing good order, in any behaviour which ſeems to argue an opinion of *peculiar* inſpiration from heaven, of a partial commiſſion, delegated to reform the world by irregular, uncharitable, and offenſive interpoſition; if it pretends to viſions and illuminations unexperienced by the beſt and wiſeſt of men; if it aſſumes the privilege of actually converſing IN PERSON with Jeſus Chriſt, and talks of the hour and moment when the Holy Ghoſt

Ghoſt ruſhed upon the boſom; it is time to beware of the infatuation of a deluded fancy. There is certainly every reaſon to believe that ſuch a temper of mind is not from God.

But it is folly and impiety to confound with theſe that ſweet frame and diſpoſition of mind, which the ſcriptures deſcribe as deſcending from the Holy Ghoſt, and which has indeed every mark of divine origin.

He who condemns the doctrine of divine agency on the mind of man, as FANCIFUL, muſt, if he is conſiſtent, include the whole of the Chriſtian religion, and all that has ever been ſaid or written in favour of it, under the ſame imputation. According to him, the fair edifice muſt melt away, like a palace of ice, when the ſun of reaſon ſhines upon it. But we maintain that the true goſpel, which is indeed the doctrine of grace, is the ROCK of ages.

SECTION XXXIII.

Of Seaſons of Deſertion, or ſuppoſed Abſence of the Spirit.

THERE are ſeaſons in the lives of good men, when their ſenſe of ſpiritual things is comparatively dull; and many, at theſe times, have been alarmed with an idea of being totally deſerted by the Spirit, and have fallen into a ſtate of deſpondency. But if there were no other proof that the grace of God is ſtill vouchſafed to them, their uneaſineſs alone would evince it. While pain is felt, the ſurgeon apprehends not a mortification.

But the alarm, it may be preſumed, is, to the pious Chriſtian, unneceſſary. For it is certain that the viſitations of the Holy Spirit are ſometimes more ſenſible than at others; and that when they are not ſenſible

at

at all, its guidance and benign protection may continue unaltered. The light ſometimes ſhines with a bright and ſtrong effulgence, to guide us into the right way; but while we are proceeding in it ſafely and regularly, and without an inclination to deviate, or immediate danger of falling, the rays may be emitted leſs powerfully, becauſe leſs neceſſary. The moment there appears danger of wandering or of ſtumbling, the lamp is ready to ſhine with inſtantaneous radiance. Thus an infant, juſt beginning to walk, is guided by the parent's hand, watched with the parent's eye, and encouraged by the parent's voice, and yet it is often permitted to go alone, without aſſiſtance or encouragement, in order to exerciſe its ſtrength, and to give it a due degree of confidence. But the tender mother may ſtill hold the leading-ſtring unobſerved by the infant, and, at the very firſt lapſe, ſave the fall. The ſun, though obſcured by clouds, affords both light and warmth, guides mankind in all their operations,

tions, and ſupports both animal and vegetative life.

The miſtaken opinion that ecſtaſy and rapture are always neceſſary to evince the preſence of the Holy Spirit, has brought the doctrine into diſcredit among the ſober and rational, and introduced much miſery among the ignorant, the weak, and the fanciful. The ſober and rational neither experienced ſuch ardour without *intermiſſion*, nor did they believe the nature of man, as he is now conſtituted, capable of ſupporting it. The ignorant, the weak, and the fanciful, endeavouring to raiſe themſelves to a height which they could either not reach or not maintain, fell from diſappointment to dejection, and from dejection to deſpair.

In truth, the influence of the Spirit ruſhes not like a continual torrent, but flows as a gentle river, which, indeed, for the moſt part, diſplays its ſilver ſurface in the meadows, but may ſometimes conceal itſelf, without being loſt, in a ſubterranean channel.

While we retain faith, hope, and charity, and while we ſeek the favour of God in fervent prayer, we have every reaſon to believe that GRACE abounds in us, though we ſhould not, for a conſiderable time, be favoured with the livelier experience of its immediate energy. If we perſevere in a virtuous courſe, we may reſt aſſured that God will, at all proper intervals, and for our reward and encouragement, ſhew us the light of his countenance.

Let the pious Chriſtian remember, that HOPE is placed, in the celebrated enumeration of Chriſtian virtues, next to faith, and before charity. Let him, therefore, take care not to indulge the leaſt tendency to ſuch melancholy ideas of deſertion as may lead to deſpair. God will not behold a ſincerely contrite heart, anxious to find grace, without affording it; and though, for wiſe purpoſes of trial, it is poſſible that he may not, for a ſhort time, beſtow it in its more *ſenſible* influences, yet there is every reaſon to believe,

lieve, that he who *ſincerely grieves* becauſe he thinks himſelf leſs *favoured* by the *Holy Spirit* than uſual, is, on that very account, in a STATE OF GRACE, and therefore ſafe.

SECTION XXXIV.

Of the Doctrine that the Operations of the Holy Spirit are NEVER *diſtinguiſhable from the Operations of our own Minds.*

INGENIOUS and philoſophical divines, deſirous of diſcouraging, to the utmoſt of their power, all fanciful pretenſions to the guidance of the Holy Spirit, have boldly affirmed that its influence is not to be diſtinguiſhed from the ordinary operations of the human mind. Their endeavour to prevent the evils of a wild imagination deſerves praiſe; but they ſhould be cautious of miſrepreſenting the effects of divine agency, and denying truth, with a deſign of obviating error.

From the plain and repeated accounts of ſcripture, it appears that this divine agency produces a very great alteration in the mind; a much greater than could be produced by its own natural operations. It is God that worketh in you, ſaith St. Paul,

Paul, both to will and to do of his good pleaſure *.

I ſpeak with the utmoſt diffidence, when I ſay that it appears probable that ſuch powerful *energy* is *ſometimes* diſtinguiſhable from the ſpontaneous operations of the mind. I am ſenſible that the doctrine may open a door to fanatical extravagance; but if it is the true doctrine, it ought to be maintained, whatever may be the conſequences.

The influence of the Holy Ghoſt is repreſented in ſcripture as conſolatory. When a good man, in deep affliction, feels, in conſequence of his prayer and devotion, a ſpring of comfort flowing upon his mind, ſuch as no reaſoning of his own, no external circumſtances, no condolence of his friends could produce, is there not reaſon to believe that the influence of God's Holy Spirit is upon him, and that it is diſtinguiſhable from his own thoughts and imagination? The operations of his own mind lead only to horror and diſmay; but a light riſes up in the darkneſs; and is it not eaſy

* Phil. ii. 13.

to perceive that this unexpected radiance is the day-ſpring from on high?

When the pious Chriſtian, employed in fervent prayer, finds himſelf full of holy joy and humble confidence, and feels his heart melt within him, overflowing with love of God and charity to man, is there not more preſumption in attributing this ſtate to the mere operations of his own mind, than to the God of ſpirits, actually diſpenſing that grace or favour which he has promiſed, in the goſpel, to the faithful?

When temptations to ſin aſſault with violence, and a man feels himſelf ſtrengthened, ſo as to be able to overcome, at the very moment of his intended ſurrender, ſhall he erect the victorious trophies to his own virtue? His own reaſon and reſolution had betrayed him, the operations of his own unaſſiſted mind tended to conceſſion; but God gave him ſtrength from his holy place, and to God only is due the praiſe.

Innumerable are the circumſtances and ſituations in life, in which comfort, illuminations, protection, and ſtrength are afforded

forded in a degree and manner, which it is much more unreaſonable to think could be produced by the mere operations of the mind, than that they were ſupplied by the author and giver of all good.

In making the diſtinction between the operations of the Holy Spirit and thoſe of the human mind, the wiſeſt men will ever be obnoxious to miſtake. The weak, wicked, and hypocritical may deceive themſelves or others in it, to the injury or offence of many. But ſtill the inconveniences of this perverſion cannot entirely juſtify divines in their confidential and repeated aſſertions, that ſince the extraordinary gifts of the Spirit, ſuch as were beſtowed on the apoſtles, have ceaſed, the operations of the Holy Ghoſt on the mind are *in no inſtance or degree* to be diſtinguiſhed from its own operations. Theſe aſſertions approach nearly to an entire denial of the doctrine: a very dangerous and impious blaſphemy *.

" * *Nam ſi tota Dei actio conſiſtit in clarâ evangelii*
" *propoſitione, opportunè factâ, cur* omnipotentia *ad id*
" *requiritur?*

" *requiritur? Quorsum adhibentur a* PAULO *magni-*
" *ficæ illæ voces, ad describendam, quam exerit Deus in*
" *nobis, omnipotentiam,* Eph. i. 18, 19. *quum dicit esse*
" υπερβαλλον μεγεθος δυναμεως *et* κατα την ενεργειαν του κρα-
" τους της ισχυος.—To assert that the POWER of God working in us, differs not perceptibly from the ordinary power of man.—" *Annon hoc est actionem*
" *omnipotentem Dei* obscurare *et in nihilum ferme redi-*
" *gere?* TURETIN.

It may here be asked, What man can judge *infallibly* of that which passes in the mind of another? Yet many RATIONAL divines *dogmatically* declare to their disciples, that it is *impossible*, in any circumstances, to distinguish the energy of God's grace on their hearts, from the common and *natural* workings of the passions and imagination. This is to assume a power of discernment which belongs to him only, to " *whom all hearts are open, and from whom no se-*
" *crets are hidden.*"

SECTION XXXV.

Of devotional Feelings or SENTIMENTS.

THE pious devotee has expoſed himſelf to the deriſion of the ſcorner, by talking of ſpiritual feelings which he could not accurately deſcribe; and the reality of which can never be proved by *external* teſtimony.

But I know not why the word *feeling*, which, in this age, is applied to all occaſions, ſhould not be applied to religion. The lover, the artiſt, the connoiſſeur enlarge upon the acuteneſs of their feelings in the contemplation of the excellence they admire. The man of delicacy is for ever boaſting of his fine feelings, and the beautiful embarraſſment which they create. The ſpectator in a theatre, the hearer at a concert, expatiates on the effect which the ſpectacle and the muſic have produced

on his *feelings*; and ſhall not he who contemplates the univerſe, and adores the maker of it, and of thoſe powers by which he both adores and contemplates, ſhall not he be allowed to *feel*; and when his boſom glows with love, gratitude, and devotion, ſhall his pretenſions to feelings be ſtigmatized as the delirious language of a wild enthuſiaſm?

The frigid temper of ſcholaſtic theology would deny the reality of every thing which, from its own defect of ſenſibility, it never yet experienced.

That the divine Spirit, operating on the mind, ſhould cauſe in it a SERENITY, a tranquillity, a comfort, which no words can expreſs, is highly credible; when a thouſand inferior agents, or cauſes, are able to produce emotions of various kinds; gentle or violent, painful or pleaſing. But well-meaning divines, endeavouring to explode thoſe extravagant pretenſions to *feeling*, which have deluded the vulgar, diſturbed ſociety, and driven many to madneſs, have denied the poſſibility of ſuch SENTIMENTS, and

and attributed them entirely to the force of fancy, to folly, and to hypocriſy. They deſerved praiſe for their endeavour to prevent evil; but by exceeding the bounds of truth in their cenſure, they prevented good at the ſame time. For their doctrines unintentionally taught men to neglect the benign ſeaſons of grace, and to confound the holy aſſiſtance of heaven with the mere operations of the human mind. They allow that the ſcripture plainly ſpeaks of heavenly influence; but they boldly aſſert, that it can NEVER be diſtinguiſhed from the ordinary actings of natural ſentiment, intellect, paſſion, and imagination.

The word feelings, in religion, has been treated with ſuch contempt and ridicule, that the truth is in danger of ſuffering, without a fair examination. Such is the force of words and prepoſſeſſion. But let the word be changed to the ſynonymous term, SENTIMENT, and then let any one object, with ſolid argument, to giving the name of religious ſentiment to that pious, virtuous, pure ſtate of mind, which

is cauſed by the influence of the Holy Ghoſt, in the happy hour when God, in his mercy, ſhowers it down, more abundantly than uſual, on the human boſom.

But, on this topic, great caution is required; for men, eſpecially the ignorant and paſſionate, are prone to attribute their own dreams and emotions to demoniacal or celeſtial impreſſions. Such a perſuaſion leads to ſpiritual pride *, to a perſeverance in error and vice, to cruelty, and to perſecution. He who is acquainted with eccleſiaſtical hiſtory, will recollect many dreadful examples of falſe feelings, and pretended inſpiration. The deluded and deluding perſons have repreſented themſelves as prophets, new Meſſiahs, and even as God; and what is more extraordinary, they have perſuaded many to believe them, and have conducted a willing

* Falſe religion is always oſtentatious. Its object is to be noticed, admired, revered. When *men talk* of their FEELINGS, there is reaſon to ſuſpect vanity, hypocriſy, or knavery. It is juſtly ſaid, NON EST RELIGIO, UBI OMNIA PATENT.

multitude

multitude to whatever miſchief their zealous hearts erroneouſly conceived.

While, therefore, a conviction that there *is indeed a religious* SENTIMENT, or a *divine and holy feeling*, which impreſſes the heart more forcibly than any argument, induces me to maintain ſo important a truth; I muſt, in the moſt anxious and importunate terms, expreſs my deſire that none may teach, and none ſubmit to be taught, a belief, at this period, in EXTRAORDINARY inſpiration.

All ſpiritual pride, all cruelty, all perſecution, are, in their nature, repugnant to the Spirit of grace: and though they probably proceed from ſtrong feelings, they are feelings ariſing from paſſion, fancy, and actual inſanity. Whoever is under their influence, muſt have recourſe to the SPIRIT OF GRACE, that his feelings or ſentiments may become all gentle, benevolent, peaceable, and humble. If his extravagancies ſtill continue to carry him to injurious actions and diſorderly behaviour, application

tion muſt be made to the phyſician, or, in caſes of extremity, the civil magiſtrate.

There can be nothing in the genuine SENTIMENT, or *feelings*, occaſioned by the Spirit of God, which is not friendly to man, improving to his nature, and co-operating with all that ſound philoſophy and benignant laws have ever done to advance the happineſs of the human race.

SECTION XXXVI.

Of Enthuſiaſm.

ENTHUSIASM is commonly uſed and underſtood in a bad ſenſe; but if its real meaning * be attended to, it may certainly admit of a very fine one. It means a conſciouſneſs or perſuaſion that the Deity is actually preſent, by an immediate emanation or impulſe on the mind of the enthuſiaſt; the reality of which, in certain caſes, is the doctrine of the church and of the goſpel; a doctrine ſufficiently conſonant to reaſon, and not neceſſarily connected with ſelf-deluſion, folly, madneſs, or fanaticiſm.

But becauſe many have made pretenſions to the privilege of God's immediate preſence in their hearts, whoſe lives and conduct gave reaſon to ſuſpect that they were not thus favoured, the word enthuſi-

* ΕΝ ΘΕΟΣ.

aſm,

aſm, which, in common language, expreſſed their falſe pretenſions, has fallen into diſgrace, and now often implies no more than the idea of a bigot, or a devotee, weakly deluded by the fond viſions of a diſordered imagination.

But let not enthuſiaſm of the better kind, a modeſt confidence of being aſſiſted, as the goſpel promiſes, by the agency of the Holy Spirit, be involved in undeſerved diſgrace*. We are taught that the Divinity

" * GRATIA IMMEDIATA, *qualis ab orthodoxis*
" *docetur, nihil habet commune cum enthuſiaſmo, ſed di-*
" *verſimodè ab eo differt.*

" 1. *Enthuſiaſmus* novas *quærit Revelationes* extra
" verbum; *ſed* GRATIA IMMEDIATA nullas, *quia*
" *verbum ſemper* comitatur, *nec aliud agit, quàm ut il-*
" *lud menti imprimat.*

" 2. *In enthuſiaſmo, objecta quæ menti imprimuntur*
" *non extrinſecùs adveniunt, ſed intus a Spiritu per ar-*
" *canas inſpirationes ſuggeruntur. Sed hìc objectum*
" *ſupponitur ſemper extrinſecùs advenire et ex verbo*
" *peti.*

" 3. *Enthuſiaſmus fit per ſubitos motus, qui ipſum*
" *diſcurſum et ratiocinationem antevertunt, et ſæpe ex-*
" *cludunt. Sed Spiritûs operatio non excludit, ſed ſe-*

" *cum*

Divinity reſides in the pure heart. The belief of it is indeed enthuſiaſm, but it is enthuſiaſm of the noble, the virtuous, the neceſſary kind. The ardour which it inſpires is laudable. Like that of all other good things, the corruption and abuſe of it is productive of great evil; but ſtill it is not itſelf to be exploded.

There is, indeed, a cold philoſophy, which ſeems to diſcourage all the warm ſentiments of affection, and will hardly allow them in any thing which concerns religion. It aims at reducing theology to a ſcholaſtic ſcience, and would willingly deſcant of the love of God, and the ſublimeſt diſcoveries

" *cum trahit ratiocinationem et gratum voluntatis con-*
" *ſenſum.*
" *Deniquè, ne plura diſcrimina jam perſequamur, en-*
" *thuſiaſmus non infert cordis mutationem*; *et* mentem
" *afficit,* IMMUTATA *ſæpe manente* VOLUNTATE;
" *unde in* IMPIOS *etiam cadit, ut in Balaamo et aliis*
" *viſum*; *ſed* OPERATIO GRATIÆ *neceſſariò infert*
" cordis mutationem *et* ſanctitatis ſtudium."

TURRETIN.

This author here ſpeaks of *enthuſiaſm* in its vulgar ſenſe—which is certainly a DISEASE; a mental FEVER, attended with delirium.

of

of the goſpel, in the ſame frigidity of temper as it would explain the metaphyſics of Ariſtotle. But there is a natural and laudable ardour in the mind of man, whenever it contemplates magnificent objects; and which is certainly to be expected, when that object is the Lord God omnipotent, and the human ſoul, the particle of Deity, aſpiring at re-union with the Supreme Being, and meditating on immortality.

Is there not an ardour of enthuſiaſm, which admires and produces excellence in the arts of muſic, painting, and poetry? And ſhall it be allowed in the humble province of imitative ſkill, and exploded in contemplating the GREAT ARCHETYPE of all; the ſource of life, beauty, order, grandeur, and ſublimity? Shall I hear a ſymphony, or behold a picture, a ſtatue, or a fine proſpect, with rapture, and at the ſame time conſider God, who made both the object and the ſenſe that perceives it, with the frigid indifference of abſtracted philoſophy? Shall I meditate on heaven,

hell,

hell, death, and judgment, with all the coolneſs with which a lawyer draws a formal inſtrument, an arithmetician computes a ſum, or a logician forms a ſyllogiſm in mood and figure?

Such coolneſs, on ſuch ſubjects, ariſes not from ſuperiority of wiſdom, but from pride and vain philoſophy, from acquired *calloſity* or natural inſenſibility of temper. God has beſtowed on man a livelineſs of fancy, and a warmth of affection, as well as an accuracy and acuteneſs of reaſon and intellect; he has beſtowed a HEART vibrating with the tender chords of love and pity, as well as a *brain* furniſhed with fibres adapted to ſubtile diſquiſition.

The ſcriptures afford many examples of a laudable and natural enthuſiaſm. *My heart was hot within me*, ſays David, and the warm poetry of the pſalms, the rapturous ſtyle of prophecy, are proofs that thoſe who have been *ſingularly favoured* by God, were of tempers which the modern philoſophers would call enthuſiaſtical. Their fire was kindled at the altar. St. John

John was a burning and a ſhining light. St. Paul was avowedly of an ardent temper, and a glowing imagination; nor did our Saviour himſelf expreſs his ſentiments in the cold language of the Ariſtotelian ſchool, but with emphaſis and pathos.

They who rail at enthuſiaſm, in general terms, and without making a due diſtinction between the ſcriptural and the falſe kind, conſiſt either of thoſe who laudably endeavour to diſcredit the pretenſions of the hypocrite, and the weak brother; or of thoſe who, from their ſpeculative habits, their cold tempers, or irreligious lives, labour to diſcountenance all pretenſions to an excellence and purity, which they never felt, and to which they could not riſe.

Whoever believes what the ſcriptures indiſputably affirm, that the *body is the* TEMPLE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT, and that he actually reſides in it, when it is purified ſufficiently for his reception, is ſo far an ENTHUSIAST; but let him glory in the appellation, for he is ſuch an one as every Chriſtian,

Chriſtian, who thinks and feels in conformity to the goſpel he profeſſes, muſt be of neceſſity. If he denies the agency of the Spirit of God on the ſoul of man, he denies the moſt important doctrine of revelation, and muſt be a ſtranger to its fineſt effects on the human boſom.

But ſince ſuch is the caſe, let thoſe who very laudably write againſt enthuſiaſm * of the falſe kind, take care not to confound truth with falſehood; and not to proceed to ſuch an extreme in refuting the pretenſions of hypocrites, fools, or knaves, as to infringe on the genuine and ſublime doctrine of grace, the glory of the everlaſting goſpel.

* There is an old ſaying, "Give a dog an ill "name, and they'll hang him." Thus alſo, give the doctrine of grace, though plainly EVANGELICAL, the name of ENTHUSIASM or METHODISM, and a very great part of mankind will immediately explode it, without the ſlighteſt examination.

The name of *methodiſt* has been given to all the clergy, who preach or profeſs the doctrines of the reformation, as expreſſed in the articles, homilies, and liturgy of the church, to which they have ſolemnly aſſented, in the preſence of God and man.

SECTION XXXVII.

Cautions concerning Enthuſiaſm.

So many and ſo melancholy are the effects of miſtaken and exceſſive enthuſiaſm, recorded in the annals of mankind, that wiſe men are juſtly alarmed at every appearance of it, and little inclined to give it indulgence.

Whatever there has been of ſavage cruelty, whatever of public violence, and tumult, and confuſion, the utmoſt extremes of all theſe evils, in all their conſequences, have been equalled by the frantic extravagance of falſe enthuſiaſm. It has exhibited, in ſome tempers, all the ſymptoms of a malignant diſeaſe, and terminated, at laſt, in real and moſt deplorable inſanity.

If then it be wiſdom to obviate the approaches of diſtemper, thoſe men have evinced themſelves wiſe, who have laboured to diſcourage, by all the arts of ridicule

ridicule and argument, the earlieſt tendencies among the people to religious phrenzy. There are innocent follies, and there is a madneſs, which is only the object of compaſſion; but the folly and madneſs of the bigot are deteſtable, becauſe they are deſtructive as a peſtilence. Againſt ſuch an enemy to human happineſs, philoſophy has urged her beſt reaſon, juſtice has unſheathed her ſword, and the ſtage, to complete the triumph, has played all the batteries of deriſion.

But argumentation, coercive force, and even ridicule, have been found ineffectual. All theſe are claſſed, by the bigot, under the term perſecution, and perſecution, like a current of air, adds violence to fire. The gentler, the kinder, the more Chriſtian mode of expoſtulation and rational conceſſion, wherever conceſſion can be made, may, like a balſamic vulnerary, heal the ſore which oppoſition would cauſe to rankle.

I therefore do not deny the juſtice of the enthuſiaſt's pretenſions, who profeſſes himſelf

ſelf actuated by a belief that the Holy Spirit condeſcends to aſſiſt him in virtuous endeavours, by a ſacred influence from Heaven. But I caution him againſt entertaining, for a moment, the preſumptuous idea, that the ſame Spirit which aſſiſts him, does not, with equal readineſs and efficacy, aſſiſt his pious neighbour alſo, and all ſincere believers, throughout Chriſtendom, however diſtinguiſhed by ſect, church, or perſuaſion.

I urge him to try his Spirit by the infallible touchſtone of ſcripture. Is it pure, is it peaceable, is it gentle, eaſy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocriſy *? If it ſhould be deficient in any of theſe amiable qualities, let him be cautious of indulging it, leſt the Spirit ſhould be of a diabolical, and not of a heavenly nature.

And in what manner is he to form a judgment of himſelf, ſince the heart is deceitful; and to know oneſelf is the moſt

* James, iii. 17.

difficult of ſciences? If his high pretenſions are accompanied with a bad life; if he be diſpoſed to contend with rancour and violence in ſupport of his pretenſions; if he be diſpoſed to involve all who think differently from him in perdition; if he decry good works; and if, with every appearance of ſanctity, and many external acts of piety and benevolence, he reſerves to himſelf ſome *ſecret and favourite vice*, he may reſt aſſured, that the Spirit which actuates him is not from above.

If he be inclined to neglect, deſpiſe, and revile decent and uſeful ordinances, ſuch as are countenanced by ſcripture, and have a direct tendency to preſerve peace, benevolence, and piety; if he prefers himſelf to all regular and learned miniſters, whether in the eſtabliſhment or out of it, and preaches to ignorant and deluded multitudes in the fields, with the air and voice of phrenzy, he may have juſt reaſon to fear, though he ſhould have ten thouſand in his train, that he has carried his pre-

tenſions to the Spirit beyond that wiſdom, moderation, and love of order, which the author of our religion taught, both by precept and example.

If, in his writings, he applies the ſcriptural language to himſelf, and aſſumes the authority of a primitive apoſtle; if, at the ſame time, he expreſſes his ideas in ſuch a manner as to excite the laughter and contempt of men of ſenſe and approved goodneſs, he may infer that his ſpiritual pride has hurried him to the verge of inſanity; and, as he values his health and happineſs, ſhould exert himſelf to remove the febrile ſymptoms, which are at once contagious and fatal.

When mechanics, of confined education, and not remarkable for natural diſcernment, or peculiar virtue and goodneſs, think themſelves better able to inſtruct the people, than a numerous claſs of their fellow-citizens, who have been ſeparated, from their youth, for ſacred offices, inſtructed in learning of various kinds, verſed in the original languages of ſcripture, the very

very idea implies ſo great a degree of pride and ſelf-conceit, that it cannot come from the gentle, unaſſuming ſpirit of him who was himſelf meek and lowly, and who every-where taught his diſciples the leſſon of humility.

If ſuch perſons urge, in defence of their extravagant behaviour, their dereliction of their trades and daily labours, and their aſſumption of the prieſt's office, a particular CALL, from Heaven itſelf, louder than reaches the ears of others, let them, before they believe themſelves, or perſuade others, produce, as a credential of their commiſſion, a miracle. If they find themſelves utterly unable to do this, let them return to the workſhop and warehouſe, renounce the *deceitful* ſpirit, and evince their attainment of the true, by humility, charity, modeſty, and obedience to lawful ſuperiors; by a *ſtudy to be quiet*, and an attention to their own buſineſs.

From ſuch practices, and ſuch perſons as I have alluded to, has ariſen much of the diſgrace which has fallen on true and laudable

enthuſiaſm, or that wiſdom which is infuſed into the pure, gentle, and charitable heart from above. Falſe enthuſiaſm ſhould be diſcouraged, that *true* religion may grow and flouriſh; as the weed ſhould be plucked up, to give room for the wholeſome plant to ſtrike root, and expand itſelf in foliage and bloſſoms, and produce good fruit in abundance.

SECTION XXXVIII.

Of being RIGHTEOUS *overmuch.*

IT ſeems to be very doubtful, whether the ſcriptural phraſe of being *righteous overmuch*, ſignifies that ſort of exceſs which methodiſts and fanatics are apt to indulge. I am rather induced to believe, that it means an extreme rigour in exacting from *others* an unerring rectitude. "Be not righteous overmuch; "why ſhouldſt thou deſtroy *thyſelf* ?*" That is, "Eſtabliſh not, by thy ſeverity, "a rule ſo ſtrict as muſt, if put in force "againſt thyſelf, involve thee, imperfect "as thou art, in deſtruction." The prohibition ſeems to me to quadrate with the old obſervation, that juſtice in the extreme is extreme injuſtice †.

There are other interpretations of the words at leaſt as probable as that which confines it to the over-ſanctity of the methodiſt or bigot.

* Eccleſ. vii. 16. † *Summum jus, ſumma injuria.*

The ingenious and pious Dr. Trapp has taken the words in the latter ſenſe, and written, with great force of argument, againſt the extravagances of methodiſm. Perhaps the words of his text did not properly authorize him in deriving the doctrine from them which he has laid down; but, whether they did or not, I think he had reaſon on his ſide, when he endeavoured to explode all ſuperſtitious exceſſes which are ſubverſive of true religion, injurious to ſociety, and painful to the deluded individual.

Philoſophers, by the light of nature, diſcovered, in the earlieſt ages, the wiſdom of avoiding extremes; and no precepts are more common than thoſe which recommend the golden mediocrity. Theſe were undoubtedly ſuggeſted by actual experience, and a careful ſtudy of the human conſtitution. If they are juſt and proper, when applied to philoſophy, there is every reaſon to think them equally ſo, when applied to religion, which is the perfection of philoſophy. Exceſs, in the very name, implies culpability, even when the things

things in which it appears are of a virtuous and laudable nature.

So that whoever advances his virtues beyond the line of rectitude, errs no leſs than he who ſtops, at an equal interval, on this ſide of it. Yet, at the ſame time, I muſt obſerve, that there is ſomething far more noble and generous in errors of exceſs than of defect; and the virulence which has been ſhewn in refuting the poor methodiſt, who has been tormenting himſelf with ſuperfluous auſterities, ſeems to me to ariſe from a want of good-nature and charity, far more criminal than the miſtaken diſcipline of a zealous devotee.

That part of the methodiſts who are ſincere in their rigid ſelf-denial, and in all the active and paſſive virtues of their perſuaſion, are certainly objects of kindneſs and compaſſion, rather than of ſevere animadverſion.

The church, and the proteſtant diſſenters, it appears, teach the doctrine of grace; a doctrine which, I believe, the methodiſts conſider as of the firſt moment;

and for the ſake of attending to which with more earneſtneſs, they ſeceded from the church and meeting-houſe to the tabernacle. Their preachers, they found, were uſed to dwell upon that ſubject, more than on any others; and with a degree of vehemence not uſual or approved by men of more learning, moderation, and humility. They were caught by the ſound, and taught to hate both the church and all regular miniſters with a hatred truly unchriſtian. The church and the miniſters, it ſeems, were not ſufficiently holy for their purpoſe. The church and the miniſters did not preach the goſpel in its purity; and neither its doctrine nor its diſcipline were ſufficiently ſtrict and ſevere.

The diſſemination of ſuch ideas may anſwer the ends of ſelf-appointed leaders, who wiſh to increaſe their importance, by drawing a multitude after them. Accuſation will generally be heard with attention. Pretenſions to ſuperior holineſs is one of the moſt ſucceſsful means of deceit. The multitude are attracted by theſe, and a thou-

a thouſand other arts, co-operating with the natural tendency which they feel to ſuperſtition and fanaticiſm. They become ſelf-tormentors; loſe moſt of the comforts, and neglect many of the duties of life.

In the church, their favourite doctrine of grace *ought to be* inculcated in the manner which both reaſon, ſcripture, and experience beſt approve; for the doctrine of grace is moſt fully declared to be the doctrine of the church of England; and if the miniſters are reluctant to preach it in all its force, it is from a fear of falling into the ſin and diſgrace of *over-much righteouſneſs*. It is the humble endeavour of my treatiſe on this ſubject, to ſtimulate preachers to enlarge on the doctrine of grace; and by thoſe means to bring back the numerous ſheep who have ſtrayed from their flock. There is the ſort of food in which the ſheep will ſhew that they delight, if the ſhepherds will but bring it forth; and indeed there is little doubt but that moſt of them do, on ſome occaſions: but if the ſheep

hunger and thirſt after more than they receive, the good ſhepherd will not fail to open all the ſtores with which the ſcriptures abundantly ſupply him.

With reſpect to doctrine, the over-righteous Chriſtian, as he is now called, will thus have no cauſe to complain of defect in the church; and with reſpect to moral diſcipline, it is very certain that ſelf-denial, mortification, faſting, active beneficence, and all Chriſtian perfection, is taught by the church and her miniſters, with great force of argument and authority. Every Chriſtian may carry the moral diſcipline of his religion to whatever lengths his conſcience or inclination may urge him.

It muſt be confeſſed, that ſuch is the moderation of the church and her paſtors in the PRESENT AGE, that the duties which they teach are not urged with that unnatural rigour which precludes the rational enjoyment of life. It is a cheerful church, and for that reaſon the more eſtimable. It requires no exceſſive auſterity. It aims at aſſiſting poor erring mortals in overcoming

coming their weakneſs and miſery; but it does not add to them, by requiring the ſacrifice of health, eaſe, peace, ſociety, cheerfulneſs, and innocent gaiety. It does not condemn thoſe, with whom it cannot agree in opinion, with uncharitable ſeverity. It is gentle and candid; it is accommodated to ſuch a creature as man, for ever aiming at good, but, from weakneſs, continually relapſing into ſome degree of evil. It does not, like the ſevere ſyſtem of the over-righteous, inflame and aggravate the wounds of its patients, but, with lenient balſamics, aſſuages their anguiſh *.

And if the over-righteous object that regularly-bred miniſters want vehemence and earneſtneſs, I affirm that the objection cannot be *univerſally* well-founded. Men, having various degrees of talents, and various degrees of ſenſibility, will have a correſpondent variety in their modes of delivery. The lively by nature, with very

* By the CHURCH I wiſh to be underſtood all thoſe who are united to Chriſt by the Holy Ghoſt, wherever they dwell, and by whatever *denomination* they are diſtinguiſhed. The WORLD, in the ſcriptural ſenſe, conſiſts of all who are not ſo united.

little ſenſe of religion, may be animated in their diſcourſes; the dull by nature, with a meaning very honeſt and pious, will be poor orators. And it always happens, in a very large body of men, that ſome are idle and irreligious; though circumſtances may have led them to aſſume a profeſſion where careleſſneſs and impiety are doubly culpable. But ſuch is the preſent ſtate of human nature. He who demands more perfection than experience has ever yet known, is unreaſonable and *over-righteous*. If ſome men have leſs pretenſion, and leſs vehemence, than thoſe who are called the OVER-RIGHTEOUS, they have probably leſs hypocriſy, leſs folly, and leſs ſpiritual arrogance. Over-righteouſneſs, with all its pretenſions to humility, is the parent as well as the child of pride.

After all, let us remember that there is an *under-righteouſneſs* (if I may uſe the term) as well as an over-righteouſneſs; and that mankind are much apter to err from defect than exceſs. While hypocriſy and fanaticiſm are avoided, let us not, in the preſent times, be alarmed at danger from exceſſive piety.

SECTION XXXIX.

All extravagant and ſelfiſh Pretenſions to the Spirit to be anxiouſly avoided, as they proceed from and cheriſh Pride, and are frequently accompanied with Immorality.

OSTENTATIOUSLY to pretend to greater portions of the Spirit than others, is alone a very unfavourable ſymptom, as it is a preſumptive proof of two wants, not compatible with the Spirit's benignant influence: the want of humility, and the want of charity. It is no wonder, therefore, that thoſe who have made ſuch pretenſions, have diſgraced them by the wickedneſs of their lives; and have induced ill-judging men haſtily to conſider the whole doctrine of divine aſſiſtance as a mere deluſion.

Hypocrites, in fanatical times, when the appearance of extraordinary piety was conducive to advancement in wealth and honours,

nours, were ſure to go farther in their pretenſions, than the modeſty of true profeſſors could permit or excuſe: but that deceitfulneſs of heart which produces hypocriſy, leads to all other bad conduct; and religion has been diſgraced by the ſingular profligacy of oſtentatious profeſſors.

Knaves of the very worſt kind, who have no other object than to avail themſelves of the credulity of others, are likely at all times to put on a cloak and a maſk, which may render them externally reſpectable, and facilitate their purpoſes of deceit. Nothing ſeduces the ignorant and unexperienced ſo eaſily as the appearance of extraordinary ſanctity; and nothing has been more frequently aſſumed, for the accompliſhment of ambitious and lucrative deſigns. When theſe deſigns have been accompliſhed, the cloak and the maſk have been thrown aſide, as uſeleſs incumbrances, and the villain has ſtood forth in his proper ſhape and colour.

Men of weak heads and warm hearts have proceeded to the moſt extravagant

lengths in pretenſions to ſanctity; and at the ſame time, from the want of ſolid virtue, have fallen into deplorable ſins. Their ſins derived additional deformity in the eyes of the people, from the contraſt of aſſumed ſanctity; and the world was ready to exclaim that all religion muſt be vain, if, in men who diſplay ſo much of it, it contributes ſo little to wiſdom and virtue.

Great ſinners, unwilling to tread the rugged road of virtue, have thought it an eaſier and pleaſanter mode of avoiding the conſequences of their enormities, to perſuade themſelves of ſudden converſions, and peculiar favour from heaven; and to compenſate for inward impurity by outward ſanctity, and for diſobedience in things eſſential, by intemperate zeal in things indifferent, formal, and merely oſtentatious.

Thus ſpiritual pride, want of charity, hypocriſy, knavery, folly, and extreme wickedneſs, have given riſe to extraordinary pretenſions to the Spirit, and verified the obſervation, that the wickedeſt of mankind

mankind have been among thoſe who diſplayed the appearance of goodneſs and piety in the EXTREME.

" The gradation has been," (ſays Dr. Trapp,) " righteous overmuch in prac-
" tice—righteous overmuch in practice
" and doctrine—immoral and profligate
" in both; and this ſtill with pretenſions
" to *extraordinary* meaſures of the *Holy*
" *Spirit.*"

But to what ſhould a conviction of this truth lead the ſober Chriſtian? Certainly not to deny the doctrine of ſupernatural aſſiſtance, which he finds in the goſpel; but to avoid all extravagance of pretenſion, all boaſting, all over-righteouſneſs, all preference of himſelf to others, on account of ſpiritual gifts, leſt he alſo ſhould find himſelf deceived and a deceiver.

The religion of Chriſt is of a retired and reſerved nature. Its moſt important tranſactions are in the receſſes of the heart, and in the cloſet. It loves not noiſe nor oſtentation. Let him, therefore, who wiſhes to know whether he really has the Spirit, examine

amine whether his virtues and good diſpoſitions abound in retirement, and without the leaſt parade whatever, or the ſmalleſt applauſe or reward of men. If he does good privately, and avoids the eyes of admirers, I think he may entertain an humble confidence that he has the *favour of* God. He has, in conſequence, a ſource of joy within him, which no man taketh away. He has the bread of life, and *feeds on it in his heart by faith with thankſgiving.* He is ſilently and unoſtentatiouſly happy, neither courting the notice of the world, nor regarding its unjuſt cenſure. He is particularly careful, that no ill-treatment ſhall cauſe him to violate the law of charity. His chief concern is to bear and yet forbear; to *be* rather than to *ſeem* good.

SECTION XL.

Affected Sanctity, Demureneſs, Canting, Sourneſs, Cenſorioufneſs, ignorant and illiterate Preaching, no Marks of a State of Grace, but contribute to bring the whole Doctrine of Divine Energy into Contempt, and to diffuſe Infidelity.

RELIGION is lovely. Her voice is melodious, and her aſpect delightful. How has ſhe been deformed! She has been taught to utter jargon with the hoarſe croaking of the portentous raven, or to ſcream with the terrific howlings of the bird of night. Her face has been changed from the face of an angel to a gorgon's head, ſurrounded with ſnakes. She has been rendered a bugbear, terrifying all who approach her, inſtead of a gentle nurſing mother, inviting wretched

wretched mortals to her foſtering boſom, by the tendereſt blandiſhments of maternal love.

Men of natural ſenſe, improved by a learned education, and poliſhed by all the elegancies of cultivated life, have turned from her, thus diſguiſed as ſhe appears, with diſguſt and horror. They have devoted themſelves to a ſeducing philoſophy, and left religion, thus disfigured, to the groſs vulgar, whom they erroneouſly conceived were naturally attached to the horrors of a cruel and gloomy, as well as a ſilly, ſuperſtition.

Is it not deſirable to vindicate Chriſtianity from ſuch diſhonour? to ſhow that her moſt important doctrine, the doctrine of divine energy, leads to every diſpoſition that it is gentle, amiable, and beneficent; that it exalts, refines, and mollifies the human boſom; and while it kindles a lively and pleaſant hope of future felicity, improves every real enjoyment of the preſent life? Such a repreſentation, and it certainly is a juſt one, muſt invite every man, who

who feels duly for himſelf or others, within the Chriſtian pale.

The Spirit is a ſpirit of truth, and therefore muſt be adverſe to all affectation of ſanctity, all ſtudied ſeverity of aſpect and demeanour, intended only to excite external reſpect, and to impreſs on the ſpectators, often for the ſake of intereſt, as well as from vanity, an idea of ſpiritual pre-eminence. The Spirit is a loving ſpirit, and therefore very unlike that of the ſour, cenſorious pretenders, who condemn all innocent amuſements, and think none capable of divine favour but themſelves, and thoſe who entertain their ſentiments on points perfectly indifferent in the ſight of God, and of every reaſonable man. The Spirit is a ſpirit of wiſdom, which implies a due degree of knowledge and ability for every undertaking we voluntarily engage in, and therefore cannot approve the preaching of illiterate perſons, who are unacquainted, not only with the languages in which the ſcriptures were written, but often with their own; who

are

are fitter to be catechumens than catechiſts; to ſit at the feet of Gamaliel, than to uſurp his chair. Learning may not be requiſite in the pious hearer, but is certainly ſo in every one who aſſumes the office of an inſtructor. He is not an honeſt man, who profeſſes and is paid to inſtruct others, without having exerted himſelf to the utmoſt to procure a competent ſtore of knowledge. The operations of the Holy Spirit, accompanying his endeavours, may make a good Chriſtian in his private capacity; may give him faith and knowledge ſufficient for his ſalvation; but they do not, ſince the time of the apoſtles, beſtow a knowledge of languages, or qualify ALONE, without the aids of human learning, for a TEACHER of theology.

The annals of ſuicide, if any ſuch there were, and the regiſters of Bedlam, might bear witneſs to the miſchiefs cauſed by fanatical mechanics, with ſtrong paſſions and imaginations, but of feeble and narrow intellects, wildly haranguing weak and aged men and women on their loſt ſtate, on

their danger of eternal damnation, and a thouſand other moſt awful matters, which at once puzzle the underſtandings, and diſmay the hearts of the deluded multitude. True Chriſtianity ſhudders at the ſufferings of well-meaning devotees, wantonly inflicted by ignorant zealots, ſeeking ſelf-importance, and gratifying the pride of their hearts, as *leaders* of a wretched tribe, whom noiſe and high pretenſions collect eaſily in every populous city, and in every poor neighbourhood, where the neceſſity of conſtant manual employment for the means of ſubſiſtence precludes all contemplation, and the improvement of judgment that might reſult from it.

In compaſſion to theſe people, who deſerve every aſſiſtance, becauſe they certainly intend every thing that is good, though they do and ſuffer great evil, through defect of judgment, I wiſh the regular clergy, both of the eſtabliſhed and diſſenting church, to feed them with the food in which they delight—the heavenly manna, the doctrine of grace. There is

no

no doubt but that many of them do ſo occaſionally; but I ſubmit it to them whether it ought not to be a leading and principal topic in every diſcourſe inculcating morality. I beg leave to ſuggeſt that EVANGELICAL preaching, in which the doctrine of divine energy muſt always make a very conſiderable part, would keep their congregations from wandering after men, who have no other qualification for preaching but zeal, real or pretended; zeal without knowledge, or a knowledge confined, ſuperficial, and unaccompanied with general charity or ſound diſcretion. With all their defects, they do, however, preach the doctrine of grace. The people know this to be the genuine doctrine of the goſpel, and therefore they flock by tens of thouſands to hear it, regardleſs of the barbariſm of the ſelf-appointed orator, who leaves the loom and the laſt for the pulpit.

The pearl of great price they eſtimate highly, however rudely it may be ſet; but how much more would they prize it, if it were

were ſet, adequately to its immenſe value, in the pureſt gold, by the hand of a maſter? If men of ſound and extenſive learning, of true taſte and eloquence, were to recommend it, with all the beauties of proper language, the field-preacher would rant in ſolitude, and the tabernacle would be as empty as moſt of the pariſh churches in London. To them I refer the inquirer, who wiſhes to know how little the moſt decent and ſtudied diſcourſes on morality, or practical religion, avail to attract the people. Let him leave a while his books and library, and read the volume of real life. We have had enough of words, enough of ſyſtems, enough of controverſy; let us ſtudy and teach what is really and efficiently uſeful to the maſs of the people, what improves human nature, renders life as comfortable as the condition of humanity will admit, and opens a pleaſing proſpect, when life muſt be relinquiſhed, beyond the grave.

SECTION XLI.

Biſhop Lavington's *Opinion, reſpecting the Extravagancies and Follies of fanatical Preachers, and Pretenders to the Spirit.*

"WHEREVER I find great ſtreſs laid "upon ſome imaginary, inſignifi- "cant, or unintelligible peculiarities; the "word of God turned into a conjuring- "book; the divine ordinances either "lightly eſteemed, or imputed to the "devil; good works either underva- "lued or trodden under foot; wild-fire "dangerouſly toſſed about, inſtead of that "light which came down from heaven; "puffing pretenſions to extraordinary re- "velations, inſpirations, uſurping the "name of the Holy One; with perſonal "conferences with God, face to face; "enthuſiaſtic ranters, comparing them- "ſelves with prophets and apoſtles, if not "with Chriſt himſelf; the moſt wild and "extravagant behaviour, the phrenzies of

" a diſturbed brain, or deluded imagina-
" tion, the effects of fits, of a weak
" head, or DISEASED BODY, all turned
" into ſo many teſts and marks of ſaint-
" ſhip; the SPIRIT OF PRIDE AND VA-
" NITY poſſeſſing the LEADERS; a ſpirit
" of ENVY, RANCOUR, broils, and im-
" placable animoſities, daſhing each other
" in pieces; a ſpirit of bitterneſs and un-
" charitableneſs towards the REST OF
" MANKIND; a progreſs through *immo-*
" *rality*, *ſcepticiſm*, infidelity, atheiſm,
" through ſpiritual deſertions, DESPAIR,
" and MADNESS, made the gate of per-
" fection; an IMAGINARY *new-birth* to be
" brought to paſs by means of REAL
" TORTURES, of ſome of the moſt ex-
" quiſite pangs and ſufferings that can
" affect human nature;—I ſay, where
" theſe are found, and many more equally
" horrible, one may eaſily diſcern a wide
" difference between ſuch a *diſpenſation*
" and GENUINE RELIGION; as well as the
" bungling hands that are ſubſtituting the
" former in the place of the other. One
" may eaſily ſee what ſtrangers ſuch in-
" conſiſtent

" conſiſtent ramblers muſt be to the true
" devotion, as well as the COMFORTS of a
" ſedate, compoſed piety; to a firm belief
" of our Maker and Redeemer, and a
" conſtant reliance upon Providence; to
" a ſteady courſe of ſincere, habitual, and
" unaffected religion; to the cheriſhing
" of a warm love of God in the heart,
" and well-tempered zeal for the truths of
" his inſpired word; and all this PROVED
" by the *love of our neighbour*; to a gene-
" ral obſervance and attendance on the
" MEANS OF GRACE, and a well-grounded
" hope of glory."

From the wretched follies of fanatics, the mind turns with complacency to the gentle, benignant Spirit which guided a biſhop Wilſon, a Watts, a Doddridge, a Nelſon, and a Horne. Such men do honour to the doctrine of grace, and reſcue it from the contempt under which it has fallen through the extravagance of weak devotees, and the *unhappy ingenuity* of ſcholaſtic theologiſts, explaining away, to ſhew their ſkill, the ſtrongeſt expreſſions of holy ſcripture.

SECTION XLII.

Pride the great Obſtacle to the general Reception of the Goſpel of Grace.

A PROUD, turbulent, and vindictive ſpirit is utterly incompatible with the ſpirit of Chriſtianity; but a proud, turbulent, and vindictive ſpirit conſtitutes what is called, in the world, a man of honour; and who can aſpire at the diſtinctions and rewards which the world has to beſtow, without aſpiring at the character of a man of honour—without zealouſly maintaining it, in defiance of all which the ſcriptures have taught us to conſider as the WILL OF GOD? No wonder, then, that the genuine goſpel, the SPIRIT, which is firſt *pure*, then *peaceable*, gentle, and eaſy to be entreated, ſhould be utterly neglected by thoſe who are more ſolicitous about the opinion of a few weak and wicked mortals

tals like themſelves, than about all that Chriſtianity promiſes or threatens; who regard neither God nor man, when their own *ſelf-eſtimation* is in the ſmalleſt degree depreciated. SUBMISSION of the temper and underſtanding, which is neceſſary for the reception of that EVIDENCE of Chriſtianity which the Holy Ghoſt affords, is conſidered as contemptible meanneſs, by thoſe who are full of themſelves, and live only to *flatter*, for the ſake of being re-flattered, in the circles of ſelf-idolizing vanity.

The doctrine of a participation with the divine nature, conceded by Heaven to the faithful and pious of *low degree*, is highly mortifying to thoſe who think the perfection of human nature conſiſts in civil nobility, in blood, or in titles conferred by an earthly monarch. He who ſhares the divine nature, who is favoured with an emanation of Deity, is truly ennobled; for his very nature is exalted above the ordinary rank of humanity; and according to the goſpel, he is become the living temple of

the Holy Ghoſt. That a poor man, ſuch as were the apoſtles, and ſuch as are many true Chriſtians in the preſent day, ſhould poſſeſs a nature raiſed above whatever earthly honours can beſtow, is a doctrine offenſive to all who have been taught to conſider, as the *chief good of man*, the gratification of the *pride of life*.

Scholars alſo, deep mathematicians, metaphyſicians, and logicians, feel a ſentiment of ſcorn, when they are told that a plain, ſimple, humble peaſant, whoſe mind is rightly diſpoſed, may receive a portion of divine illumination, which ſhall contribute more to ſound wiſdom, and conſequently to happineſs, than all their minute and laborious diſquiſitions. Philoſophy, towering, like Icarus, on wings made by the art of man, to the clouds, looks down with contempt on Religion, who aſſociates with ignorant wretches, diſtinguiſhed by humility of rank as much as by humility of diſpoſition. Philoſophy leaves the company of a perſonage ſo mean, and frequently paſſes from

from a contempt of her, to downright hatred and enmity *.

Thus pride is a chief obſtacle to the reception of the doctrine of evangelical grace. Pride blinds the eyes of the underſtanding againſt the evidence of the Holy Ghoſt. Pride cauſes *hardneſs of heart*, a quality the moſt odious to the divine, and moſt injurious to the human nature. It teaches us to behold our inferiors, not only as not of the ſame fleſh and blood with ourſelves; not only as little entitled to the comforts and advantages of this life; but as unworthy of partaking with us in the divine favour, and the happineſs

* The gentile or genteel philoſopher too often hears with pain ſuch ſentiments of Chriſtianity, as thoſe of Eraſmus in the following paſſage:

" *Exiſtimo puram illam Chriſti* PHILOSOPHIAM " *non aliundè fœlicius hauriri quam ex evangelicis li-* " *bris, quàm ex apoſtolicis literis; in quibus, ſi quis* " PIE philoſophetur, ORANS *magis quàm* ARGU- " MENTANS, *nihil eſſe, quod ad hominis felicitatem,* " *nihil quod ad ullam hujus vitæ functionem pertineat,* " *quod in his non ſit traditum, diſcuſſum, et abſolutum.*"

ERASMUS.

of a glorified ſtate. The doctrine of grace is conſidered by the men of the world as too great a *leveller*, to be freely admitted conſiſtently with their own ideas of exclusive privileges, or of worldly policy *. It muſt therefore be *cried down*, wherever their authority can prevail †.

But ſurely their objection does it honour. It ſhews that the doctrine is favourable to the whole human race; that it is not narrow, partial, unjuſt; but, like the Author of all good, whence it flows, accepts not the perſons of men, neither regards the tranſient and petty diſtinctions of rank, but ſhews favour to the meek and lowly,

* Yet they ſhould remember, that death is a greater leveller, and one whom no policy or power can eſcape.

† *How can ye* BELIEVE, *which receive honour one of another?* John v. 44.

Men lean on reeds, when they rely ſolely on each other for happineſs and honour. Indeed, what real honour can one poor loſt creature receive from another, who is exactly in the ſame condition, if without GRACE?

Whatſoever ye do, do all to the GLORY *of God.* 1 Cor. 10.

and

and to all that are good and true of heart, whether in the palace or in the cottage.

Take comfort, ye poor and deſpiſed brethren; for God, by his goſpel, has promiſed to beſtow on you riches and honours, durable as they are ſolid, and ſuch as no earthly power can confer or alienate: and would to Heaven that they, who *truſt* in worldly riches and honours, could but behold it in a true light, their real poverty and diſhonourable ſtate, when deſtitute of grace, or, in other words, the *favour* of the Almighty SOVEREIGN, the Lord of Lords, and the King of Kings *.

* *Neſcit religio noſtra perſonas accipere, nec conditiones hominum, ſed animos inſpicit ſingulorum. Servum ac nobilem de moribus pronunciat. Sola apud Deum libertas eſt non ſervire peccatis. Summa apud Deus eſt nobilitas clarum eſſe virtutibus.*

Hieronymus ad Celantiam, *Ep.* 14.

Ευγενεια δε, η της εικονος τηρησις, κ᾽ προς το αρχετυπον εξομοιωσις, ην εργαζεται λογος κ᾽ αρετη.

GREG. NAZ. in Orat. 11.

Ευγενειαν δε λεγω, ου χην οι πολλοι νομιζουσιν· απαγε· αλλ᾽ ην ευσεβεια χαρακτηριζει κ᾽ τροπος, κ᾽ η προς το πρωτον αγαθον ανοδος. Idem, in Orat. 23.

SECTION XLIII.

The univerſal Prevalence of the Holy Spirit —the genuine Grace of the Goſpel— highly conducive to the Happineſs of CIVIL SOCIETY, *as well as of Individuals.*

IT always appeared to me an abſurdity, that men ſhould act in their corporate capacity on ſuch principles as, in their individual and private ſtate, they would deem profligate. Public acts are the acts of private men; and wherever public acts are immoral, it may be concluded, that thoſe who ſanction them in a body, are, as ſeparate members, inſincere friends of virtue, and hypocritical profeſſors of religion. Offenſive war, and treacherous violation of the moſt ſolemn treaties, could never be countenanced by whole nations of Chriſtians, if the individuals were

actuated by the ſentiments of true Chriſtianity.

It has been ſaid, that we are not to look for the effects of Chriſtianity in national acts or public councils. Why not? Are they not men and Chriſtians, who perform national acts, and compoſe public councils? When a man gives a vote for any public meaſure, or adviſes the ſupreme magiſtrate, does he drop the Chriſtian in the voter or the counſellor? Common ſenſe revolts at the idea of the ſame men's renouncing their identity, ſplitting themſelves into ſeveral characters, and acting in one inconſiſtently with their moſt ſerious duties and ſolemn engagements in another, which, at the ſame time, they profeſs zealouſly to ſupport. Miſery unutterable ariſes to the human race, from this duplicity. The ſanctity aſſumed in one character throws a falſe glare and varniſh over the villainy practiſed in the other, and makes it paſs current by authority.

A man who is a real Chriſtian, not a political conformiſt only, will be a Chriſ-

tian in his public conduct, as well as in his private. He will be a Chriſtian ſtateſman and member of parliament, no leſs than a Chriſtian father, huſband, and neighbour.

Now, no man is a Chriſtian in name only, when his Chriſtianity ariſes from the operation and evidence of the Holy Ghoſt. His very heart is converted. The whole man is renewed. He is no longer a proud, ſelfiſh, cruel being, greedily ſeeking his OWN fancied gratification, at the expence of other men's happineſs, but guided in all his conduct by the ſentiment of love. The law of kindneſs governs all his actions. His wiſdom is gentle; and he uſes power, if he poſſeſſes it, in imitation of the all-powerful being above, in diffuſing bleſſings to all who are within the ſphere of his influence.

Suppoſe, then, kings, and rulers of all deſcriptions, under the benign operation of the Chriſtian ſpirit, and conſequently firm believers and *defenders* of Chriſtianity. Unneceſſary wars immediately ceaſe. The prophecies of Iſaiah are accompliſhed. Swords

and

and ſpears are converted into pruning hooks and plough-ſhares. The lion dandles the lamb, without an inclination to devour it.

The people, feeling the bleſſings of ſuch government, and actuated by the gentle affections of charity, become cordially attached to it, and to each other. Univerſal tranquillity reigns. The whole ſociety, both the governed and governing, cooperate in adding to the comforts and diminiſhing the evils of life; piety to God, and love to man, diſplay the vital efficacy of the goſpel, and prove that it is not a cunningly deviſed fable, invented by prieſts for the ſupport of kingly power, but the lively energy of God, actuating the human boſom, and reſtoring man to that perfection of nature by the ſecond Adam, which was loſt by the diſobedience of the firſt in Paradiſe.

The trueſt patriotiſm, therefore, is to revive or diffuſe genuine Chriſtianity; to teach men to ſeek and to find the grace of God through Chriſt Jeſus. This is the philoſophy which ſhould be taught from the

the chairs of our univerſities, and the pulpits of our churches. It would not then fall to the illiterate and fanciful mechanic, who often diſgraces it, not only by ignorance of all other ſcience, but too often by a violence of paſſion and malignity of temper, which ſeem to evince that he does not poſſeſs what he ſo warmly recommends to his audience.

Chriſtianity is ſo far from unfitting man for ſociety, as the calumniators have ſaid, that its graces and virtues are peculiarly ſocial. It teaches every thing that is juſt and kind. It is the falſe, miſtaken, hypocritical, and, above all, the POLITICAL Chriſtianity, which has been the cauſe of miſchief and miſery. This has ever been uſed as a cloak for maliciouſneſs. But where the Spirit of God, the living goſpel of immediate grace, goes hand in hand with the written goſpel, there every thing lovely, friendly, and beneficial, is the natural and unavoidable reſult. The root is good, and the fruit delicious and ſalubrious in the higheſt degree. May the tree

ſpread

ſpread its umbrageous branches over the land, and all the people take refuge and ſeek ſolace under its expanded foliage! The throne that is eſtabliſhed in righteouſneſs is fixed on the rock of ages; and the people who have the Lord for their God and King, ſhall never know the woes of captivity and deſolation.

Chriſtian philoſophy purifies ſociety by purifying the fountain of all human actions, the heart of man. Heathen philoſophy often conſiſted of nothing more than *fine ſayings*, pleaſing to the imagination, but leaving the heart uninfluenced and the conduct unreformed.

Some of thoſe heathens, who wrote the fineſt morality, it is well known, practiſed, and even obliquely recommended, with all the charms of wit and eloquence, vices which degrade man below the brute.

SECTION XLIV.

Of Holineſs—its true Meaning, and abſolute Neceſſity.

LET a man's mind be holy, and he will not doubt one moment of the truth of Chriſtianity. It is not enough to be learned or ſagacious; it muſt be holy; and then the more learned or the more ſagacious, ſo much the more firmly will its belief be fixed, and ſo much the better enabled to extend the faith. Bacon, Boyle, Locke, Newton, Milton, Addiſon, Lord Chief Juſtice Hales, poſſeſſed intellects as vigorous as ever fell to the lot of human beings; but they were educated *piouſly* as well as learnedly, according to the manners of their times. They lived *holily*; the Spirit of Grace took early poſſeſſion of their hearts, and they became not only believers but defenders of the faith. Not to their learning, but to their holineſs, be the glory. They ſaw God by the eye of faith, not of philoſophy.

There is one qualification, without which we ſhall never be admitted to the favour of God, or to celeſtial felicity in the manſions of future glory, and it is HOLINESS:

Without this, we read, no man ſhall ſee the Lord. *Follow peace with all men, and* HOLINESS, *without which, no man ſhall ſee the Lord* *.

No words can be plainer, and more expreſs than theſe. A queſtion naturally ariſes in the mind of every thinking man, in what conſiſts this quality, which is indiſpenſably neceſſary to ſecuring the beatific privilege of enjoying the divine preſence? What is holineſs?

The excellent Joſeph Mede informs us, that "*ſanctity*, or holineſs, imports *diſcrimination*,—or diſtinction from other things by way of exaltation and pre-eminence †.

God

* Heb. xii. 14.

† Thus Kimchi,

" קדוש שבת להבדילי משאר הימים.

" To *ſanctify* the ſabbath, is to *ſeparate* it from " other days."

" בי

God himſelf is originally, abſolutely, and eſſentially HOLY; man, only by communication.

Holineſs I therefore underſtand to be that ſtate, in which God vouchſafes to man his HOLY SPIRIT, and *diſcriminates* him from thoſe who, rejecting his offers of grace, preſumptuouſly adhere to the world and its vanities; who neglect religion entirely, and who live without God in the world, deſpiſers of his grace. To be holy, is to be refined, by the Spirit of God, from the corruptions of the world; to be *ſeparated* from ſin and impurity, like the metal from the baſe alloy.

He, therefore, who would *ſee the Lord*, muſt, by *obedience*, ſeek the manifeſtation of the Spirit, by *prayer* obtain the divine aſſiſtance, and thus be admitted to a parti-

" כי כן כל לשון קרושח הוא ענין הבדלו
" מאחר במעלה.

" Becauſe all words of *ſanctity* import a thing *ſe-*
" *parated* from other things by way of pre-eminence
" or excellency." JOSEPH MEDE.

cipation

cipation of the divine nature: *according as his* DIVINE POWER *hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godlineſs, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue; whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promiſes, that by theſe we might be* PARTAKERS OF THE DIVINE NATURE, having eſcaped the CORRUPTION that is in the world through luſt *.

The happy ſtate of holineſs conſtitutes the true dignity of human nature. This at once purifies and elevates it. The man who poſſeſſes it, enjoys this world with calm complacency, while he riſes ſuperior to it, and hopes for a better in reverſion. He acts rightly, yet never rigidly, he always tempers juſtice with kindneſs and mercy; his whole behaviour is gentle, flowing from an internal principle of benevolence. The fear of God and the love of man operate on his heart as the main ſprings of all his activity. To expreſs his conduct in ſcripture language, he does juſ-

* 2 Pet. i. 4.

tice,

tice, loves mercy, and walks humbly with his God.

Behaviour thus amiable and beneficent is the ſureſt proof of holineſs. Great pretenſions, ſanctimonious deportment, a rigid obſervance of external ceremonies, and a pertinacious adherence to particular doctrines, are all conſiſtent with an unholy ſtate, with ſelf-deceit, and with hypocriſy. But he who is kindly affectioned to his fellow-creatures with brotherly love; he who is *unoſtentatiouſly* pious, and diſplays the fruits of the Spirit by good works, he can entertain little doubt of SEEING GOD; ſeeing the truth of his word, and enjoying his preſence in the living temple of his heart, thus conſecrated by the influence of the Holy Ghoſt.

A delightful ſerenity attends that ſtate of holineſs, which ariſes from an humble confidence in God; ſuch as would render it devoutly to be wiſhed for, if its conſequences extended only to the pleaſurable enjoyment of this life. It cauſes our journey to reſemble a paſſage through thoſe charming countries,

countries, where the air is genially ſoft, the ſky clear, and the proſpect variegated with every beauty of nature. The cold, ſhivering, ſelf-dependent mortal, who walks through the world all ſolitary, who has not God for his friend and companion, may be compared to the forlorn ſavage, prowling for prey far from the ſolar beam, in the regions near the pole. How would he rejoice in the warm ſunſhine and ſweet ſerenity of an Italian climate.

SECTION XLIV.

Of a good Heart.

THE moſt deſirable treaſure which a human being can poſſeſs, whether he has regard to his own happineſs or to thoſe around him, is a GOOD HEART. In every ſituation, and under all circumſtances, this will furniſh a ſtore of ſweets which the wicked cannot obtain; and delicious though it is, would not reliſh, ſo vitiated is their taſte. A good heart communicates liberally the pleaſures it enjoys; bleſſed or bleſſing in every emotion.

But what conſtitutes a good heart? The grace of God operating upon it. The mild, gentle, healing ſpirit of the goſpel; or, to uſe the language of ſcripture, the UNCTION of the HOLY GHOST, mollifying its hardneſs, and preſerving it from corruption.

tion*. This it is which forms a good heart, and a good heart is a land of Canaan to itſelf, a land flowing with milk and honey.

All the iraſcible paſſions are, in their exceſs, diabolical. They are the fruitful

* Beautiful is the deſcription which Lactantius gives of the effect of Chriſtianity in meliorating the diſpoſition. I will tranſcribe his words:

" *Da mihi virum, qui ſit iracundus, maledicus, ef-*
" *frænatus: pauciſſimis* Dei verbis *tam placidum*
" *quam ovem reddam. Da cupidum, avarum, tena-*
" *cem: jam tibi eum liberalem dabo et pecuniam ſuam*
" *plenis manibus largientem. Da crudelem & ſangui-*
" *nis appetentem; jam in veram clementiam furor ille*
" *mutabitur. Da injuſtum, inſipientem, peccatorem:*
" *continuò et æquus & prudens & innocens erit. Uno*
" *enim Lavacro malitia omnis abolebitur. Tanta* DI-
" VINÆ SAPIENTIÆ *vis eſt; ut in hominis pectus*
" *diffuſa, matrem delictorum, ſtultitiam, uno ſemel im-*
" *petu expellat; ad quod efficiendum, non mercede, non*
" *libris, non lucubrationibus opus eſt. Gratis iſta*
" *fiunt, facilè, cito; modo pateant aures et* PECTUS
" SAPIENTIAM SITIAT: *num quis hæc philoſopho-*
" *rum aut unquam præſtitit aut præſtare potuit?*"

LACT. *Inſt.* Lib. ii. C. 26.

Thus appears the ſuperiority of CHRISTIAN PHILOSOPHY, in a *moral* view, over all other philoſophy. Lanctantius had been a heathen philoſopher, and ſpeaks experimentally.

ſources

ſources of miſery. They would unparadiſe the garden of Eden, and turn the chearful light of Heaven into gloomy darkneſs, like the ſhadow in the valley of death. There is in the world much natural evil; there are pains, and diſeaſes enough, to wean the heart from the immoderate love of it; but none of them are productive of wretchedneſs ſo great and difficult of cure as the malignant paſſions of pride, envy, and revenge. Theſe eſtrange man from man, and convert the haunts of human creatures into dens of foxes and wolves. Cheats, calumniators, robbers, murderers, in all their variety and degrees of flagitiouſneſs, are characters naturally flowing from hearts unſoftened, unenlightened, unhallowed by the Spirit of Grace.

But behold the Chriſtian. Gentleneſs and ſweetneſs beam from his eyes, and illumine his countenance with a mild luſtre. Good humour predominates in all his demeanour. He has no concealed rage rankling

rankling in his boſom; he has no ſiniſter and ſelfiſh views, under a ſtudied openneſs of countenance. He converſes with a generous frankneſs. His boſom is tranſparent. You are perfectly ſafe with him. He will ſerve you, if poſſible, as well as pleaſe you; but he will never injure you purpoſely, or give you the ſmalleſt pain. He feels complacency in all the good he ſees around him, and delights in augmenting it. His treaſure is within him. His intereſt is in Heaven. His ambition is for objects above the world; ſo that nothing in it is of value enough, in his eſtimation, to tempt him to reſign the tranquillity of innocence, to renounce the pleaſures of a friendly and benevolent diſpoſition. He has all the ingenuous ſimplicity of the infantine age, and you delight in him, as in the harmleſs babe, who ſports around you, and expreſſes his pains and pleaſures according to the dictates of uncorrupted nature.

Such is man, when his natural aſperities are ſmoothed, and his inborn bitterneſs

ſweetened by the benign operation of celeſtial influence. Compared with the mere natural man, he is an angel. Is it not deſirable thus to raiſe human nature, and thus to improve ſociety; thus to render the earthly exiſtence almoſt an anticipation of what our imperfect imaginations picture of the heavenly? Heathen philoſophy cannot effect it. Heathen philoſophy is confined to a few, in compariſon with the myriads that compoſe the great maſs of human beings; who weary themſelves in purſuit of happineſs on this terraqueous globe. The experiment has been tried by the philoſophers of all ages, and failed. But religion can effect it. Yet what religion? A religion founded on hiſtorical faith, and heathen mythology? No; it muſt be a vital religion—a divine influence on the heart, which is plainly promiſed and announced in the glad tidings of the goſpel. This is the true *euangelion*, or GOOD NEWS *, to the human

* What NEWS was it to mankind to tell them what Pythagoras, Socrates, Epictetus, Cicero, and many others,

race. It is authenticated by the written goſpel, and there is a witneſs within us which renders it unqueſtionable. Happy they who have obeyed the voice which commands, ſaying, "My ſon, give me "thy HEART†!" When the heart is devoted to Chriſt, the underſtanding will make no reſiſtance to his doctrines, but humbly acknowledge the moſt inexplicable myſteries to be above, yet not contrary to, reaſon.

others had told them before—the expediency of moral virtue, juſtice, temperance, fortitude? The *glad tidings* were the announcing the comfort and aſſiſtance of the Holy Ghoſt, redemption, pardon, peace, and the reſurrection. This was an *euangelion*, or acceptable meſſage brought from heaven by him who had the SPIRIT WITHOUT MEASURE ‡. *Except your righteouſneſs exceed the righteouſneſs of the Scribes and Phariſees, ye ſhall in* NO CASE *enter into the kingdom of heaven.* Matth. v. 20. But the righteouſneſs (or morality) of the heathens was that of the Scribes and Phariſees. It was the righteouſneſs of the law, not of the goſpel.

† Proverbs, xxiii. 26. ‡ John, iii. 34.

SECTION XLV.

On the ſuperior Morality of the Chriſtian Philoſophy.

THE operation of divine grace being no other than the melioration of our hearts, the purifying of the very fountain of our actions, it muſt of neceſſity lead to the practice of virtue, or, in the language of ſcripture, to GOOD WORKS. It is a groſs calumny to ſay that the true doctrine of grace is unfavourable to morality. It inevitably produces every thing that is lovely and uſeful in ſocial intercourſe. The Holy Spirit's reſidence in the heart is inconſiſtent with vice and malevolence. It requires, indiſpenſably, both perſonal purity and ſocial love: and they who endeavour to obtain it, muſt begin and perſevere in the practice of every moral virtue.

The

The love of God and of mankind are the two main ſprings which actuate every Chriſtian, who is regenerated by grace.

The love of God was not enforced by heathen philoſophy. The love of man was indeed frequently, though feebly, recommended; but at the ſame time, many diſpoſitions of mind were held honourable, and worthy of cultivation, which are often inconſiſtent with the love of man. Such are valour in war, revenge, love of glory, and of conqueſt.

The love of God muſt have the moſt favourable influence on moral conduct; for no obedience is ſo perfect as that which ariſes from affection. It is the alert, cordial, ſincere obedience of a dutiful child to a tender parent. It anticipates his will, and is deſirous, in its honeſt zeal to pleaſe, of going even beyond the line preſcribed by parental authority.

And what is the love of God, but the love of goodneſs, purity, rectitude? Love not only admires, but endeavours to imitate, the object of its affection. The love

of God, therefore, produces a conduct as godlike as the condition of infirm humanity can admit. Hence St. John says, very strongly and truly, "This is the "LOVE of GOD, that we keep his com-"mandments *." It is a natural and unavoidable consequence of loving the supreme perfection, that we imitate the qualities in which it consists—purity, justice, mercy, every thing that we can conceive of permanent goodness and beauty. Such is the first hinge of Christian morality.

And the second resembles it, in its benign effects on human nature, and the state of society.

It is the love of our fellow-creature; not merely FRIENDSHIP, which is often founded only on petty interest and mutual amusement; but universal philanthropy, extending even to enemies. Every man under the operation of this liberal affection, is considered and cherished as a FRIEND and neighbour. We are taught to love

* 1 John, v. 3.

them

them as ourſelves, and to do to them as we wiſh they ſhould do to us.

This extenſive law of love is peculiar to our law-giver, the bleſſed Jeſus. He calls it a *new commandment*. He makes it the diſtinguiſhing characteriſtic of the goſpel. He propoſes his own example, to enforce obedience to it. "This is my command-"ment," ſays he, "that ye love one an-"other as I have loved you*."

But neither the love of God nor the love of man will exiſt in our hearts, in a due degree of ardour or ſincerity, without the divine influence. The *natural* man loves the world and himſelf too well, to admit, whatever he may pretend or profeſs, affections ſo liberal, ſublime, and diſintereſted. He loves MAMMON more than God; and as for the love of his fellow-creatures, he wears a falſe appearance of it, a ſtudied politeneſs, courteouſneſs, and affability, for the ſake of availing himſelf of their aſſiſtance in gratifying avarice, ambition, and

* John, xv. 12.

the love of pleaſure; but he hates, envies, or utterly neglects, all who contribute neither to his ſordid gain, nor to his perſonal gratification. Grace alone can ſoften and liberalize his contracted boſom. Grace alone can render him ſincerely, ſecretly, and impartially virtuous; and the beſt Chriſtian is the beſt member of civil ſociety.

Let him who doubts the excellence of Chriſtian morality, read our Saviour's ſermon on the mount, with the diſcourſes formed upon it by Blair *, Blackall, and other great divines of the Engliſh church. He will be ſtruck with its pre-eminent beauty and utility. Indeed the whole body of Engliſh ſermons founded on the goſpel, exhibits a ſyſtem of morality which the world never ſaw before, and which would never have exiſted without the evangelical code. I earneſtly recommend to general peruſal Biſhop Gaſtrell's little book, intitled, *Chriſtian Inſtitutes*.

* James Blair, M. A. Preſident of William and Mary College in America.

SECTION XLVI.

The true Genius and Spirit of Chriſtianity productive of a certain Tenderneſs of Conſcience, *or Feeling of Rectitude, more favourable to right Conduct, than any Deductions of unaſſiſted Reaſon, or heathen Morality.*

A MAN, rightly diſpoſed by the influence of genuine Chriſtianity, becomes a law unto himſelf, in all circumſtances and ſituations. A DIVINE TEMPER, ſuperinduced by divine energy on the heart, produces right conduct, juſt as a tree grafted with a kindly ſcion, brings forth fruit both delicious and ſalutary, under the natural operation of ſhowers and ſunſhine.

A true Chriſtian has conſtantly impreſſed upon his mind a ſenſe of God's preſence, and a conviction that he is reſponſible to his Father in heaven for all his

conduct. This keeps him in awe, mixed with love. He fears to do wrong, not with a ſervile fear, but an affectionate reverence for his all-powerful friend, who has ſhewn him great favour, and at the ſame time required, in return for it, obedience to his injunctions, as a condition of its continuance. He loves God from his heart; an affection, which comprehends in it the love of every thing that is good in moral conduct, every thing pure and holy in his own perſon, every thing beneficent to ſociety.

The reſidence of the Holy Ghoſt in the Chriſtian's heart increaſes his moral ſenſibility. He ſees with greater acuteneſs the good and beautiful * in behaviour; he feels with additional vivacity the emotions of benevolence. It gives him pain, it does violence to his very nature, thus ſublimed, to act baſely, unjuſtly, unkindly. He knows that the divine principle within him will not inhabit a polluted

* Καλοκαγαθια.

ſhrine;

ſhrine; but will take offence * and depart, if the temple be profaned by immorality.

Caſuiſtry, or long and abſtruſe reaſonings on the moral fitneſs or unfitneſs of actions, are totally unneceſſary to the man whom the heavenly teacher has inſtructed. His determinations admit not ſuch cold delay or doubtful heſitation. His heart turns, like the needle to the pole, with tremulous, yet certain propenſity, to the point of rectitude. From the infirmity of human nature, and the violence of temptation, he may decline a little to the right or to the left; but the attraction to Heaven and virtue ſtill acts upon and prevents his total aberration. Touched by heaven, he acquires a kind of polarity, which cauſes him to point thither without any inclination to deviate.

Hence he is above the ſchools of the heathen moraliſts. He diſplays that ſuperiority which Jeſus Chriſt moſt juſtly claims

* *Res delicata eſt Dei Spiritus.* TERTULL.

over Socrates. Yet he may enjoy the beautiful compoſitions of the ancients, if his education has enabled him to underſtand them. He may be pleaſed and inſtructed with their fine obſervations on life and manners, and the great advances they made in ethics, by the light of nature. But though he may derive great benefit from them, though he may be both informed and adviſed by them, yet he ſees them defective, and finds that they are not abſolutely neceſſary to accompliſh the Chriſtian, who, by the written word of ſcripture, accompanied by the Spirit's miniſtration, becomes ſufficiently enlightened for the practice of the pureſt morality, and wiſe unto ſalvation. By Chriſtian philoſophy, he experiences not only illumination, but aſſiſtance: he is taught the way that he ſhould go, and led by the hand in his journey.

I conclude, then, from this tender ſenſibility to right and wrong, and this propenſity to kindneſs, which the ſupernatural agency of the Spirit cauſes in the heart, that

that true Chriſtianity, ſuch as is founded on the vital influence of the Spirit, makes the beſt moraliſts, the moſt uſeful and worthieſt members of ſociety. And as Chriſtian philoſophy is attainable by ALL, and not confined to the rich or the learned, it appears to me, that even politicians, who conſider only the proſperity and peace of nations, would evince the higheſt wiſdom, in firſt cultivating it themſelves, and then encouraging it, by all prudent modes, among the people.

When a whole community ſhall become, by the preaching of *evangelical* doctrines, and the *example of the great*, ſubject to the power of conſcience, warmed with the love of God, and all mankind, "juſt and "good, true and ſincere, meek, humble, "tender-hearted, and compaſſionate, con-"tent, temperate, pure, and heavenly-"minded, then will men become each a "law to himſelf," and all civil government will be greatly facilitated, while the general happineſs is ſecured without wars and fightings, without tumult and diſcord, without

without capital puniſhments, without any of that ſevere coercion, which creates partial evil for the ſake of the general ſecurity.

Such a ſtate, it will be ſaid, is chimerical and Utopian. I fear, in the preſent corruptions of Chriſtianity, it may be viſionary. But every approach to it is deſirable, as it is an approach to the happineſs and perfection to which man is formed to aſpire; and therefore, it will behove all thoſe who poſſeſs power, not for ſordid purpoſes, but the general good, to haſten and extend the reign of grace. They ſhould ſay with heart as well as voice, THY KINGDOM COME.

SECTION XLVII.

The great Advantage of Chriſtian Philoſophy being taught by a commanding Authority.

WHEN mere men teach, they ſubmit their leſſons to the judgment of their hearers, who uſually aſſume the office of critics, while they appear in the character of diſciples. They will learn only what pleaſes their taſte, or is approved by their judgment. But Jeſus Chriſt, being filled with the Spirit of God, taught with commanding authority. "I "and the Father are one" (ſays he). "I ſpeak not of myſelf, but of him that "ſent me. WHOSO KEEPETH MY SAY-"INGS, SHALL NOT TASTE OF DEATH."

What heathen philoſopher ever dared to come forward, as a teacher of mankind, with ſuch weighty words as theſe? But it will be found, that however a few among

among mankind may be diſpoſed to liſten to calm reaſonings, the great maſs is moſt effectually taught what is fair and what is baſe, what is uſeful and what deſtructive*, by the voice of well-founded authority.

The ſcriptures, eſpecially thoſe of the New Teſtament, have long obtained this authority. We read them, not as we read any other book, of the wiſeſt of mortals; not as judges, empowered to condemn or approve; but as pupils or dependents liſten to the commands of an acknowledged maſter, whom they, at the ſame time, love and fear; and whoſe commands, they are ſenſible, are for their good, however diſagreeable the duty which they preſcribe. We conſult them as an oracle. But we do not ſo conſult the dialogues of Plato, or the Manual of Epictetus.

" There are," (ſays the author of the Light of Nature purſued,) " many excel-

* —— " *Quid ſit pulchrum, quid turpe, quid utile,*
" *quid non.*" HOR.

" lent

" lent ſentiments of God and morality in-
" terſperſed in the writings of the an-
" tients: but thoſe writings are ſtudied by
" few, and read chiefly for curioſity and
" amuſement, regarded as ingenious com-
" poſitions, ſhewing a ſagacity and juſt-
" neſs of thought in the authors. They
" may make ſome impreſſion in the read-
" ing, which quickly dies away again,
" upon laying the book aſide; as Tully
" tells us was his caſe, with reſpect to
" Plato upon the immortality of the ſoul.
" Whereas the Teſtament is the firſt
" book we are taught to read, to re-
" ceive as the oracle of God, con-
" taining the way to ſalvation, which, at
" our almoſt PERIL, we muſt not diſre-
" gard, and the truth whereof it is a ſin
" to doubt: therefore, whatever is drawn
" thence, comes accompanied with a reve-
" rence, and idea of high importance,
" which give a force to the impreſſion.
" Let a man take for his theſis the ſtoical
" maxim, *Things out of our power are no-*
" *thing to us*, and deſcant upon the im-

" prudence

" prudence of ſolicitude and anxiety for " future events, which we can no ways " prevent or provide againſt, it will not " work the effects which the very ſame " diſcourſe might do, pronounced from " the PULPIT, upon the text, " *Sufficient* " *unto the day is the evil thereof.*"

Where is the uninſpired philoſopher, who can addreſs mankind with the authority of St. Paul? " My ſpeech and my " preaching" (ſays he to the Corinthians) " is not with enticing words of " man's wiſdom, but with demonſtration " of the SPIRIT AND POWER, that your " faith might not be in the WISDOM OF " MEN, but in the *power of God* (ac- " companying and enforcing my words). " We ſpeak the wiſdom of God in a myſ- " tery, even the *hidden wiſdom*, which none " of the princes of this world knew, but " which God hath revealed unto us by his " Spirit, the τα Βαθη του Θεου, the depths of " God. We have received, *not the ſpirit* " *of the world*, but the Spirit which is of " God; that we might KNOW the things " that

" that are freely given to us of God;
" which things alſo we ſpeak, not in the
" words which man's wiſdom teacheth, but
" which the Holy Spirit teacheth, explain-
" ing the * things of the Spirit, (the *inſtruc-
" tions* of the Spirit,) in the language of the
" Spirit †." Again, to the Epheſians he ſays, " The myſtery of Chriſt, which in
" other ages was not made known to the
" ſons of men, is now revealed unto his
" holy apoſtles and prophets, by the
" Spirit ‡." " For this cauſe" (he adds in another place) " thank we God without
" ceaſing, becauſe, when ye received the
" WORD OF GOD, which ye heard of us,
" ye received it not as the *word of men*,
" but, *as it is in truth*, the WORD OF
" GOD §." He gives alſo a menacing admonition to thoſe who ſhould deſpiſe his directions, as deſpiſing not man, but God.
" HE THAT DESPISETH, DESPISETH NOT

* See Wolf. Cur. Critic. in Loc. and Chapman's Euſebius.

† 1 Cor. ii. 4, 5. 7, 8. 10. 12, 13.

‡ Epheſ. iii. 5. § 1 Theſſ. ii. 13.

" MAN,

" MAN, BUT GOD, WHO HATH GIVEN
" UNTO US HIS HOLY SPIRIT *."

Such is the commanding authority with which Chriſtianity addreſſes itſelf to men, including, in its peculiar doctrines and ſublime myſteries, the fineſt ETHICS, though not ſyſtematically delivered, which the world ever ſaw. Let it be conſidered what an advantage it is to have even the beſt heathen morality inculcated with the ſanction of COMMANDMENTS from the all-wiſe and all-powerful Creator. Such is now the caſe where Chriſtianity prevails. And would it be wiſe, even in a political ſenſe, though policy is a very inferior conſideration, to ſuffer a mode of teaching men to be juſt and good, thus efficacious, thus firmly and extenſively eſtabliſhed, to fall into neglect? When will the politicians of the world again obtain ſo powerful an engine? What have they to ſubſtitute, if they break or take away the main ſpring of this moſt efficacious, long-tried *machine?* I beg leave to apologize

* 1 Theſſ. iv. 8.

for

for uſing ſo degrading a term. I am ſpeaking, in their own language, to the worldly-wiſe, who deſpiſe the goſpel.

Some univerſal, *authoritative* code of *moral* law is wanted to inſtruct the MILLION, high and low, rich and poor, with great and certain effect. What teacher, from the ſchools of philoſophy, ancient or modern, if he deprive us of Chriſtianity, can ſupply the defect? Will he not ſtrive to ſupply it, but ſuffer mankind to lapſe into ignorance, barbariſm, and brutality? He may give us a laboured ſyſtem. But nothing which the moſt ingenious and learned can invent, however excellent its rules and precepts, can gain the advantage which Chriſtianity already poſſeſſes by its AUTHORITY alone. Time, and the concurrence of whole nations, have combined with its own excellence to render it impreſſive beyond any human ſyſtem. It is adapted to the poor and unlearned, of which the majority of mankind, in all ages and countries, conſiſt. It ſpeaks to them as a voice from Heaven, and it will be heard.

But its AUTHORITY muſt be infinitely increaſed, when men ſhall be convinced that the written goſpel is accompanied at the preſent hour, and will be to the end of time, with the MINISTRATION OF THE SPIRIT, the actual operation of the Holy Ghoſt, vivifying and illuminating the divine principle within us. Chriſtian philoſophy is a ſun; while all other, to uſe the poet's language, is, comparatively, but "darkneſs viſible."

Chriſt taught as one having AUTHORITY. *Chriſt ſpake as never* MAN *ſpake*; and they who hear him with faith, will, through the operation of the HOLY GHOST, poſſeſs a wiſdom and a happineſs which MAN never knew how to beſtow, and can never take away.

SECTION XLVIII.

Morality, or Obedience to the Commandments of God in ſocial Intercourſe and Perſonal Conduct, remarkably inſiſted upon in the Goſpel.

THAT moſt injurious calumny, which aſſerts that the doctrine of grace is unfavourable to the pureſt virtue and the moſt beneficent behaviour in civil ſociety, muſt be refuted in the mind of every reaſonable and impartial man, who attends to the following paſſages of Scripture:

" He that hath my commandments, and " keepeth them, HE IT IS THAT LOVETH " ME. If ye love me, keep my command- " ments. If a man love me, he will keep " my words. He that loveth me not, keep- " eth not my ſayings. Every branch in me " that beareth not fruit, he taketh away; " and every branch that beareth fruit, he " purgeth it. Ye are my friends, if ye do

" whatſoever I command you. If ye con-
" tinue in my word, then are ye my diſciples
" indeed. Hereby do we know that we
" know him, if we keep his command-
" ments. Whoſo keepeth his word, in him
" verily is the love of God perfected: here-
" by know we that we are in him. Every
" man that has his hope in him, purifieth
" himſelf. Little children, let no man de-
" ceive you: he that doeth righteouſneſs is
" righteous; he that committeth ſin is of
" the devil. Whoſoever is born of God,
" ſinneth not; whoſoever doth not right-
" eouſneſs, is not of God. Pure religion
" and undefiled before God and the Father,
" is this—to viſit the fatherleſs and widows
" in their affliction, and to keep himſelf
" unſpotted from the world. Be not de-
" ceived; neither fornicators, nor idolaters,
" nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards,
" nor revilers, nor extortioners, ſhall in-
" herit the kingdom of God *."

* John, xiv. 15. 1 John, ii. 3. 5, &c. Jam. i. 27. 1 Cor. vi. 9. 10. Eph. v. 5, 6.

It

It were eaſy to cite a great many more paſſages of the ſame moral importance; but the written Goſpel is in the hands of all, and there no one can ſearch, with a fair and candid mind, without finding the pureſt virtue enforced on the ſtrongeſt motives that can poſſibly actuate a human creature.

The truth is, that the very ſame care and caution, the ſame virtuous exertions, are neceſſary to Chriſtians, as if there were no ſupernatural and auxiliary interpoſition. Our endeavours muſt not be relaxed in the ſmalleſt degree. The difference and advantage lies in the *reſult* and *effect* of our endeavours. Under the divine influence, they will certainly be attended with *ſucceſs*. They will promote our happineſs *infallibly*. The CHOICE of our conduct muſt be voluntary, and the perſeverance and labour muſt be directed by the pureſt motives, and the moſt ſteady, regular, and careful diligence, juſt as if we depended upon ourſelves; while, at the ſame time, they are animated and ſupported by humble confidence in heavenly favour.

No *remiſſneſs* is allowed on our part, in conſequence of God's *favour*. We are to *work* out our ſalvation with the utmoſt ſolicitude, knowing that he who gives us his grace, may, upon failure of our beſt endeavours, withdraw it, and leave us in a ſtate of woeful deſertion. Libertiniſm can avail itſelf of no ſuch doctrines as theſe, which, in the very firſt inſtance, moſt emphatically recommend *purity of heart*, the fountain of all external action.

It is remarkable of the goſpel, that it teaches obedience to human law, and every moral virtue, not only for wrath, but alſo for conſcience ſake.

SECTION XLIX.

Unbelievers not to be addreſſed merely with ſubtle *Reaſoning, which they always oppoſe in its own way, not to be ridiculed, not to be treated with ſeverity, but to be tenderly and affectionately exhorted to prepare their Hearts for the reception of the* INWARD WITNESS, *and to relume the* LIGHT OF LIFE, *which they have extinguiſhed, or rendered faint, through Pride, Vice, or total Neglect.*

FACTS have evinced, that mere human diſputation has little effect in converting the infidel. The infidel has often been remarkable for ſagacity, and richly furniſhed with all human learning, though little acquainted with divine knowledge. I never knew any of them retract their errors, after the publication of the

moſt ingenious and laborious books which claimed the honour of completely refuting them. It is time to try another method, ſince none can be more unſucceſsful than that which has hitherto been uſed. It is time to truſt leſs in human means, and rely on the *power of God*, which will manifeſt itſelf in the hearts of all men who perſevere with earneſtneſs in ſeeking *divine illumination*.

I deem it extremely imprudent and indecent to ridicule the unbeliever. It is ſetting him an example, which he may follow to the great injury of all that is ſerious and truly valuable both in morals and religion. It argues a levity and diſregard for his happineſs, very unbecoming any man who knows the value of a human ſoul, or who profeſſes a ſolicitude to *ſave it alive*. Though it cauſe no converſion, it will produce retaliation.

Still more unchriſtian is it to treat him with ſeverity. I have read books profeſſing to recommend the benign religion of Chriſt,

and

and to refute all objections to it, yet written in the very GALL OF BITTERNESS, diſplaying a pride and malignity of heart which may juſtly prompt the unbeliever to ſay, "If your religion, of which you "profeſs to be a believer, and which you "deſcribe as teaching charity or benevo-"lence in its fulleſt extent, can produce "no better a ſpecimen than your own "temper and diſpoſition, let me preſerve "my GOOD-NATURE, and you may keep "your Chriſtianity, with all the advantages "you boaſt that it contains, in your own "excluſive poſſeſſion."

The late Biſhop Warburton treated infidels with a haughty aſperity ſcarcely proper to be ſhewn to thieves and murderers, or any, the moſt abandoned, members of ſociety. Many have doubted, from the tenour of his writings, whether he was a believer; or whether he only thought it ſufficient, for the ſake of riſing in the church, to ſupport religion by argument as a ſtate engine. Certain it is, that the ſpirit which he ſhews towards his oppo-

nents * is not the Spirit of Grace; that Spirit which is loving, gentle, and eaſy to be entreated. His ſpirit is ſingularly proud and acrimonious; and ſo has been the ſpirit of many of his predeceſſors and ſucceſſors.

How amiable and gentle, on compariſon, the language and ſentiments of Voltaire and Rouſſeau! Thoſe men would have loved Chriſtianity, and probably believed it, if it had not been diſtorted and disfigured by the malignant paſſions of angry, polemical defenders of it, who ſhewed their love of Chriſt, by *hating* their brother.

* The following is a ſpecimen of the TEMPER with which Biſhop Warburton wrote his book on the *doctrine of Grace*. In the fifth chapter, where he is ſpeaking of the office and operations of the Holy Spirit, he has the following note on Mr. WILLIAM LAW, who, if miſtaken, is allowed to have been a ſincere Chriſtian, and a very good as well as ingenious man:

" This poor man," (ſays the great Prelate,) " whether miſled by his fanaticiſm or his ſpleen, " has here fallen into a trap which his folly laid for " his MALICE."

There is then no malice in this obſervation, no pride, no revenge.

Religion

Religion is beautiful. Full of grace are her lips. She ſhall ſpeak for herſelf to the hearts of unbelievers, and the world:

" Come unto me, all ye that labour and " are heavy laden, and I will refreſh you. " I call you, not for the ſake of promoting " any worldly intereſt, not for political " purpoſes, not for an eccleſiaſtical party, " not to maintain the riches or grandeur " of any eſtabliſhment; but that I may " make you happy; that I may diſpel the " clouds of trouble and doubt which " darken your paths, and ſhew you the " ſunſhine of Heaven. Mine is a ſpirit " of love. I am a lover of men. I ſeek " to do you good. I bring the glad " tidings of the Goſpel; that is, I diſcloſe " to you that God Almighty, in pity to " ſuffering and erring mortals, ſends a " COMFORTER, the Holy Ghoſt, deſcend- " ing like a dove, all peaceable, gentle, " lovely. I fill you with hope; and hope " is a cheerful paſſion. It will tranquillize " your agitated boſoms, and lead you re- " joicing on your way to the ſilent grave,

" whither you muſt go, whether you make
" your journey to it gay and pleaſant, as
" you may, under my guidance, or diſ-
" mally rugged, as it will ever be when I
" withdraw my luſtre."

Would not ſuch a mode of addreſs be more likely to conciliate men who *oppoſe themſelves* while they reject Chriſtianity, than all the angry, taunting language which has been uſed, not only againſt profeſſed infidels, but againſt *believers* who differed a little, in matters of indifference. South, Bentley, Warburton, and ſome able writers in recent times, have ſhewn, in their zealous defences, the pride of pedantry, the fierceneſs of barbarians, the ſubtlety of politicians, but quite forgot the gentleneſs which characterizes the WISDOM FROM HEAVEN, and which alone can win ſouls by the charms of ſoft perſuaſion, aſſiſted by the holy ſpirit of love.

It is ſaid of Dr. Johnſon, that he uſed to declare, he loved a good HATER. Many polemical divines have ſhewn themſelves capable of this paſſion of HATRED

in

in its higheſt perfection. But hatred begets hatred; and Dr. Johnſon's declaration is among thoſe inconſiſtences in his life, which prove a great man ſtill but a man. I am ſorry that this ſaying ſhould be recorded of him; for Dr. Johnſon profeſſed himſelf a zealous Chriſtian, and Chriſt taught us to *love* even an enemy. According to the Chriſtian rule, an enemy, inſtead of being *hated*, is to be melted to love and kindneſs by good uſage.

The *odium theologicum*, diſplayed in *controverſy*, is, in my opinion, the greateſt *opprobrium theologicum*. *Warburtonian* inſolence and ill-nature have done more injury to the church, and to the cauſe of Chriſtianity, than any of the writers whom they were intended to gall and mortify.

SECTION L.

Of the inadequate *Idea entertained by many reſpectable Perſons concerning Chriſtianity; with a Suggeſtion on the Expediency of their conſidering the true Nature of Chriſtian Philoſophy.*

To abſtain from groſs, enormous, open, and ſcandalous vices, to comply with the outward ceremonies of the Church, and to reciprocate the uſual and formal civilities of life, conſtitutes, in the opinion of multitudes, not only a very reſpectable member of ſociety, but a very good Chriſtian. Concerning the DOCTRINES of Chriſtianity, ſuch perſons give themſelves little concern, but plume themſelves on *decently* practiſing the DUTIES; by which they underſtand nothing more than a very imperfect kind of heathen morality, and the avoidance of ſuch conduct as might expoſe

expoſe them to the animadverſion of law, or to the loſs of reputation. The DUTIES of Chriſtianity thus limited, they think eaſily diſcernible, without ſtudy or reading, by common obſervation and common ſenſe. *Doing as others do*, as far as the decorum of eſtabliſhed manners allows and preſcribes, is the grand rule. Such perſons paſs through life with great credit, paying their way, and making themſelves agreeable in company, and are ſeldom mentioned but with the praiſe of very good ſort of people.

Exactly ſuch ſort of people they might have been if *Chriſtianity* had never exiſted. They hold no opinion, they adopt no practice *peculiar* to Chriſtianity. The Goſpel, which they profeſs to embrace, is a leaden rule, an accommodating guide, an humble companion, that muſt obſequiouſly ſtand on one ſide, whenever it is in the way of a faſhionable practice. Gaming, duelling, and many modes of gratification inconſiſtent both with the letter and ſpirit of the Goſpel, ſeem to

receive no check from this convenient ſpecies of Chriſtianity.

Any thoughts which may occaſionally intrude of a very *ſerious* kind, are laughed away by the ſurrounding circle, as vapours, fancies, the effects of morbid melancholy, or of nervous indiſpoſition. Company, public places, public diverſions, are immediately propoſed as a ſovereign remedy; and indeed they certainly are ſo far a remedy, that they baniſh *ſerious thoughts*, but they alſo baniſh that *happy diſpoſition* (for happineſs is ſerious) which might have cauſed the *viſitation from on high*, and obtained, for the weary ſick heart, the ſweetly-refreſhing cordial of divine grace.

Attendance at polite places of public worſhip ſeems to conſtitute the piety of ſuch perſons; and public ſubſcription to faſhionable or political contributions ſhews their charity. It ſeems fair to infer, that their piety and charity are thus circumſcribed, becauſe their actions, on other occaſions and at other places, ſeem inconſiſtent

ſiſtent with piety or charity. Sunday is often employed by them in a manner forbidden both by divine and human laws; and the poor at the next door to their manſions, in ſome retired village, are often unrelieved, while ſtrangers at a watering place, (where the benefactors names are handed about,) and advertiſed objects, receive a very ample ſhare of their public bounty.

All this while they conſider themſelves as good Chriſtians. God only knows the heart; but if they are miſtaken, as is probable, their miſtake is a very unhappy one. They are depriving themſelves of the benefit of Chriſtianity.

But their miſtake probably ariſes from ignorance. They are indeed very far from ignorant of many things. Their ignorance is chiefly religious ignorance; and it is cauſed by habitual inattention to the DOCTRINES of Chriſtianity. It is indeed rather difficult to avoid ſuch ignorance, ſince their time is occupied in what religion calls vanity, and the few hours devoted

devoted to reading are chiefly employed in novels, where a truly Chriſtian character would be deemed a perfect ſoleciſm.

I humbly hope that the contemplation of CHRISTIAN PHILOSOPHY, thus imperfectly repreſented in this little volume, may lead them to ſtudy it in the great authors whom I have cited; and I truſt they will thence find a great increaſe in their comforts, and that their happineſs will be leſs expoſed to concuſſion, when founded on the ſolid baſis of divine favour.

SECTION LI.

On Indifference and Inſenſibility to Religion, ariſing from Hardneſs of Heart. No Progreſs can be made in CHRISTIAN PHILOSOPHY *in ſuch a State, as it is a State incompatible with the divine Influence.*

THE fine feelings with which nature formed the heart of man in his primeval ſtate, and with which perhaps every infant is born, are too often rendered obtuſe by indiſcriminate commerce with the world; and the *heart of fleſh*, once tremblingly alive to the ſofteſt touch of ſympathy, is metamorphoſed to a heart of ſtone. Deplorable change! for what is man when he ceaſes to feel? a reaſoning vegetable, with this painful pre-eminence over the nettles and briars, that he has the power of being actively miſchievous in the preſent ſtate, and capable, when the ſenſi-

bility

bility ſhall be reſtored in another, of final and unſufferable woe. To lapſe into this condition, to become paſt feeling, to have a ſeared conſcience, is, without doubt, the heavieſt calamity of which human nature is ſuſceptible. Perhaps he who is reduced to it is not conſcious of it at the time; a circumſtance which, contrary to what might be expected, ultimately aggravates his misfortune. It is characteriſtic of this ſtate, that while it is alive to the vanities and miſeries of the world, it is dead to God and all the delicate ſenſations of unaffected virtue.

This condition of religious inſenſibility is not to be accounted for by cauſes merely phyſical or philoſophical. The middle-aged fall into it as well as the old, the healthy as well as the diſeaſed, men of the brighteſt talents no leſs than the dull and the ſtupid. But Chriſtian Philoſophy traces its origin, and pronounces it the conſequence of an UNREGENERATE ſtate, or the total defect of divine grace. He who

lives in it has forſaken his God, the guide of his youth; and his God has forſaken him, and given him up to a reprobate mind, a heart of STONE, at once cold and impenetrable. WHOM HE WILL, HE HARDENETH *.

Happily he, who in his diſpleaſure inflicted the misfortune, can remove it. "A new heart (ſays God) will I give "you, a new Spirit will I put into you; "and I will take away the STONY heart "out of your fleſh; and I will give you "a heart of fleſh; and I will put my "Spirit within you, and cauſe you to "walk in my ſtatutes, and ye ſhall keep "my judgments and do them †."

From this declaration mankind may conclude, (as many ever have been and ſtill are *experimentally* convinced,) that God influences the human boſom by his actual interpoſition, and the ſupernatural energy of his Holy Spirit. Chriſt himſelf ſays, "*Lo! I am with you, even unto the end*

* Romans, ix. 18. † Ezekiel, xxxvi. 26, 27.

"*of*

" *of the world.*" But how is he with us but by the Holy Ghoſt, whoſe ordinary operations are now as energetic as ever on the boſom of the true believer. Except a man be born again of this Spirit, we read in expreſs language, " he cannot ſee " the kingdom of God." No words can be more explicit. They mean regeneration by Grace, or what elſe do they mean? They ſupport, as on a rock, the doctrine of divine agency; and without this doctrine, all teaching and preaching is " as ſalt that has loſt its ſavour." This doctrine forms the ſolid baſis of CHRISTIAN PHILOSOPHY. All morality, every precept and principle which leads to happineſs preſent or future, ſtand upon it immoveably. Other buildings are of hay and ſtubble; this is of gold and marble.

And with reſpect to the charge of blameable enthuſiaſm, which is conſtantly brought, and cannot be too frequently repelled, let us hear Biſhop Lavington, ſo great an enemy to methodiſm, that he wrote

wrote the ſevereſt book which ever appeared in oppoſition to it. But thus he ſpeaks to his clergy, on a ſolemn occaſion, when he was inſtructing them how to execute their paſtoral office:

" My brethren," (ſays he,) " I beg " you will riſe up with me againſt MORAL " PREACHING. We have long been at- " tempting the reformation of the nation " by diſcourſes of this kind. With what " ſucceſs? NONE AT ALL. On the con- " trary, we have dexterouſly preached " the people into downright infidelity. " We muſt change our voice. We muſt " preach Chriſt, and him crucified. No- " thing but the GOSPEL is, nothing will " be found to be, the *power of God unto ſal-* " *vation*, beſides. Let me therefore again " and again *requeſt*, may I not add, let me " CHARGE you, to preach JESUS, and ſal- " vation through his name. Preach the " Lord who bought us; preach redemp- " tion through his blood; preach the ſay- " ing of the great High Prieſt; HE WHO " BELIEVETH SHALL BE SAVED; preach

" repentance

" repentance towards God, and faith in " our Lord Jeſus Chriſt."

Thus Biſhop Lavington; a man who abhorred fanaticiſm. Who could ever ſuſpect Archbiſhop Secker *, Biſhop Hurd, Biſhop Horne, Biſhop Horſley, of irrational enthuſiaſm? Yet, in their diſcourſes and charges, they all urge their Clergy, not to preach mere moral doctrines, the philoſophy of the heathens, but the *Goſpel*; that is, the great doctrines of redemption, atonement, ſatisfaction by Chriſt, and the neceſſity and importance of divine Grace. If, by the coming of

* " The truth, I fear, is," (ſays Archbiſhop Secker,) " that many, if not moſt of us, have " DWELT TOO LITTLE ON THESE DOCTRINES" (the doctrines of Grace and other peculiar doctrines of Chriſtianity) " in our SERMONS—by no means, " in general, from *diſbelieving* or ſlighting them."

Again, ſays the ſame diſcerning Primate, " We " have, in fact, LOST MANY OF OUR PEOPLE " TO SECTARIES, BY NOT PREACHING IN A " MANNER SUFFICIENTLY EVANGELICAL."

SECKER'S CHARGE.

There never was a more diſcreet, rational, or judicious Archbiſhop than Secker. He could not favour fanaticiſm.

Chriſt,

Chriſt, God recommended only a MORAL SYSTEM, merely REPUBLISHED the religion of nature, this would in fact have been no *Revelation*. Indeed, a merely moral Chriſtianity is Deiſm.

When Chriſtianity is the national religion, and great revenues are allotted to its profeſſional teachers, many may chuſe to join the crowd of Chriſtians for the loaves and fiſhes; many may call themſelves Chriſtians who have nothing of Chriſtianity but the name, and in their hearts deſpiſe even the name; but let all ſerious and ſenſible men remember, *that if the Goſpel is hid, it is hid to them that are loſt, whoſe eyes the God of this world hath blinded*; let them in time beware, leſt that come upon them which is ſpoken by the prophet: "Be- "hold, ye deſpiſers, and wonder and pe- "riſh; for I work a work in your days, "a work which you will in no wiſe under- "ſtand, though a MAN declare it unto "you *."

* Acts, xiii. 40, 41.

SECTION LII.

A Self-Examination recommended reſpecting religious Inſenſibility.

LET every reader take a view of the preſent ſtate of his heart. Let us all look inwardly, and conſider our real ſtate, without ſelf-flattery and deceit, uninterrupted either by buſineſs or pleaſure.

Does my heart require renovation? Is it piouſly inclined to God, and kindly to my fellow-creature? Am I convinced of my own ignorance, weakneſs, and unworthineſs? Have I enquired into the health of my ſoul, the ſtate of my temper and diſpoſition, with half the ſolicitude with which I take care to feed, to cure, to adorn my body? If not, I may call myſelf a Chriſtian, and join the congregation of Chriſtians, but I am probably ſtill a heathen, ſtill unregenerate. I may be in the gall of bitterneſs, and the bond of iniquity.

quity. My heart may be hardened through the deceitfulneſs of ſin, and as I value my happineſs in this ſhort ſtate of exiſtence, or my immortal ſoul, I muſt ſeek the divine Grace, to give me a feeling ſenſe of my wants and wretchedneſs, and of God's power to illuminate and comfort me by his Holy Spirit.

But ſuppoſing that I am feelingly convinced of ſin and miſery, and ſincerely wiſh to be delivered from it, do I ſeek deliverance by the Goſpel means, that is, through Jeſus Chriſt; or do I depend upon my own reaſon, a few moral acts and habits obſerved for the ſake of decency, for my own health, wealth, and that reputation in the world which is neceſſary to the advancement of my intereſt? If ſo, my morality is worldly wiſdom, and my religion has no claim to Chriſtianity. I am unregenerate, unconverted, unrenewed, notwithſtanding my baptiſm and my profeſſions; and continuing as I do by choice a heathen, in the midſt of the light of Chriſtianity, which at the ſame time

time I ſolemnly profeſs, I muſt finally periſh, after an unſatisfactory life.

Is my Chriſtianity a cold, philoſophical aſſent to a few propoſitions in the Goſpel, evident before the Goſpel was divulged, and ſuch as I ſelect from others of the ſame authority in the ſame book, which I do not ſo well approve? Then is my religion nominal only. I profeſs to believe, as others appear to do, what I never in my life fully conſidered. I am content to live *without God in the* WORLD, ſo long as my corn and my wine increaſe, and I can ſay to my ſoul, "Soul, thou haſt much "goods laid up for many years, take thine "eaſe, eat, drink, and be merry *." For the ſake of living at peace, and for the ſake of credit, which is intimately connected with my intereſt, I conform to all outward ceremonies and all moral decencies; but my heart has not yet been truly turned to God. I know no other God than my own gain and pleaſure; and

* Luke, xii. 20.

as

as to heaven, this earth, ſo long as I ſecure to myſelf a large ſhare of it and its good things, is my paradiſe. I ſay to myſelf, " It is good for me to be here; here will I " build my tabernacle; for it is a pleaſant " place, and I have a delight therein. " But what ſhall I ſay when this world is " receding from me, when my ſenſes de- " cay, and death evidently approaches? " Then ſhall I have no comfort, unleſs " God ſhould ſoften my heart by the effu- " ſion of his Spirit. But leſt my ob- " duracy ſhould grow impenetrable by " time, I will *immediately* implore the " divine favour, in co-operation with my " own endeavours, to reſtore my reli- " gious ſenſibility. I will henceforth " cultivate the love of God."

But to love God only, is not enough. Do I love my FELLOW-CREATURE? or, as it is expreſſed in Scripture, " my " neighbour?" The Apoſtle ſays, " Be- " loved, let us love one another, for love " is of God, and every one that loveth is " born of God, and knoweth God; he

" that loveth not, knoweth not God, and " therefore cannot be born of him, for " God is love*." How, then, is my heart affected towards my fellow-creatures? Are my friendſhips merely combinations for the ſake of intereſt and pleaſure? Is there any human being in the world whom I wiſh to be miſerable, and would render ſo if I had him in my power? Have I no ſympathetic feelings for men as men? If I cannot recollect acts of diſintereſted benevolence, I may reſt aſſured that it is the ſame hardneſs of heart which renders me inſenſible to God, that has alſo made me a ſtranger to the ſocial affections. I have need, therefore, to pray that God would thaw my heart by the ſunſhine of his grace. He who can turn a heart of ſtone into a heart of fleſh, will cauſe me to feel, by his Spirit's influence, for thoſe who ſhare with me the evils incident to humanity.

By ſuch queſtions as the above, and many ſuch every man may propoſe to himſelf, the ſtate of the heart may be aſcertained

* 1 John, iv. 7, 8.

much

much better than by ſigning articles or repeating a ſymbol.

God certainly made the heart of man tender. Jeſus himſelf wept, and thus for ever hallowed the briny fountain. Tears are appropriated to man, as one of the moſt honourable diſtinctions which ſeparate him from the brute creation. When man has dried up the ſacred ſource by acquired inſenſibility, he has degraded his nature, and muſt have recourſe to God to make him a new creature, to regenerate and render him alive to the ſentiments of divine love, and the ſoft touches of humane ſympathy. God's Spirit can break the rock of flint aſunder, and cauſe the waters to guſh from it in abundance.

And can I venture to hope that he will do ſo, that he will melt my obduracy? Yes, certainly; for Jeſus Chriſt has PROMISED the influence of his Spirit to renew the heart, and accompliſh the great work of regeneration. Without this I cannot be happy. I may be rich, great, learned,

but I cannot be happy. I am loſt and undone without it; in a ſtate more degraded and wretched than that of the loweſt and obſcureſt human being, whoſe piety and humility may have drawn down upon his heart the holy emanation of divine love.

SECTION LIII.

The Sum and Subſtance of Chriſtian Philoſophy the Renewal of the Heart *by Divine Grace; or the ſoftening it and rendering it ſuſceptible of virtuous and benevolent impreſſions, by cultivating the two grand Principles—Piety to God, and Carity to Man.*

WHAT is Chriſtian wiſdom or philoſophy? Let the apoſtle anſwer; it is to "put off the old man, which is corrupt, "and to put on the new man, which, after "God, is created in righteouſneſs and "true holineſs." We muſt be born again, or it had been better for us that we had not been born at all. The wiſdom from above is the true Chriſtian philoſophy; that wiſdom which, we are told *, "is firſt "pure, then peaceable, gentle, eaſy to be "entreated, full of mercy and good fruits,

* James, iii. 17.

" without partiality, and without hypo-
" criſy."

Hardneſs of heart is incompatible with this wiſdom which is full of mercy. The boſom muſt be ſoftened by divine influence. Redeem the time, therefore, that ye have hitherto loſt in a cold, lifeleſs, formal, *decorous* religion. Love God, love your neighbour, with the ardour of a ſincere mind, and the amiable ſimplicity of infantine innocence. Seek Jeſus Chriſt with the earneſtneſs of one who is a Chriſtian by choice, and not merely becauſe he was born in a Chriſtian country, or of Chriſtian parents; not becauſe the laws of the land have eſtabliſhed that religion, and it is creditable to appear among its profeſſors in places conſecrated to public devotion. Be Chriſtians on your pillows, in your daily employments, in the occupation of your merchandize or agriculture, as well as in your church, and on the day ſet apart for divine ſervice. Let Chriſt, by the Holy Ghoſt, be formed in your hearts, reſtoring in you the image of God,

God, in which you were created, but which was ſadly ſullied, or quite defaced, by the fall of the firſt Adam, and can be reſtored only by the mercy of the ſecond.

If there were but a probability that theſe comfortable doctrines are true, a wiſe man would cheriſh them; but as they are abundantly confirmed by the written word, by the church, by the learned, by the experience and teſtimony of millions of pious men; who would not reſolve to believe, and if any doubts ſhould at any time ariſe, to ſay, "Lord, help thou my unbelief?"

Religion has been, and is, the delight of a great part of our fellow-creatures throughout Chriſtendom. It may be ours, if we will duly *apply our minds to it*. Conſider with what ardour of attachment many ſeek pictures, books, the works of art, the objects of taſte and fancy. They *learn to love them*, by *applying* their minds to them. Half the *application* beſtowed on things, which, at beſt, are but toys, if beſtowed on religion, would make it your chief delight, the guardian of youth,

the comfort of the aged and afflicted. You would no longer conſider its duties and employments as heavy and dull. You would feel, not only the offices of charity, but devotion, ſweet to your ſoul. The gracious words of goſpel truth, of prayer, and thankſgiving, would "come o'er "thine ear," as the poet ſays,

"——— like the ſweet ſouth,
"That breathes upon a bank of violets."

It is juſtly ſaid, that in devotional offices, paſſion becomes reaſon, and tranſport, temper. Heaven muſt diſdain the cold prayer, the lukewarm praiſe of inſenſibility and indifference. The incenſe muſt blaze on the altar, before the ſweet odours can aſcend to the ſkies. Cold devotion is indevout. Heartleſs thankſgiving is an inſult. What! ſhall we be warm, and anxious, and ſanguine, in worldly purſuits, in politics and party, and dull and languid as followers of Chriſt, in ſhewing our zeal in the cauſe of the great Captain of our ſalvation, which is the cauſe of all mankind, a cauſe in which Heaven and earth are intereſted?

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Be it the great endeavour of all who would obtain wiſdom from above, to conciliate, by *fervent* prayer, the grace of God, which will remove all hardneſs of heart, the cauſe of that coldneſs and inſenſibility, which is too often moſt unjuſtly honoured with the name of MODERATION *.

* "*Becauſe thou art* LUKE-WARM, I will vomit "thee out of my mouth"—εμεσαι—one of the ſtrongeſt expreſſions of contempt and indignation in the holy ſcriptures. REV. iii. 16.

SECTION LIV.

On ſpiritual Slumber, as deſcribed in the Scriptures, and the Neceſſity of being awakened.

THE religious world is divided into many ſects; but perhaps the moſt numerous party conſiſts of nominal Chriſtians, who appear to adopt no religious opinions at all; who, indeed, neither deny the truth of any religion, nor controvert its doctrines; but who give themſelves up to the pleaſures and buſineſs of the world, or to mere thoughtleſſneſs and inactivity, and leave religion to its profeſſed miniſters, to their neighbours, to the weak, the ſick, and the ſuperannuated. In the words of Iſaiah, "They "hear, but underſtand not; and ſee, in- "deed, but perceive not; the heart of "this people is fat, their ears heavy, and "their eyes ſhut." With reſpect to their ſpiritual ſtate, they may be ſaid to have fallen

fallen into a deep ſleep; and in the midſt of their bodily activity, their ſouls are ſunk in ſlumber. To theſe the animating words of the apoſtle are addreſſed: "Awake, thou that ſleepeſt, and ariſe "from the dead, and Chriſt ſhall give "thee light."

Is it poſſible that men can ſleep ſo ſoundly, in this uncertain ſtate, while the houſe they inhabit may be ſaid to be in flames, or while they lie on the very brink of a ſteep cliff, from which, if they fall, they fall to riſe no more? Alas! it is not only poſſible, but common; though it is a ſleep, in which, whoſoever indulges, may poſſibly ſleep on till he wake no more. It may be a fatal ſleep; the ſleep of death; the ſtupor of a lethargy; the numbneſs of a ſpiritual palſy; the inſenſibility of mortification.

They who fall into this deep ſleep, like thoſe who indulge the ſleep of nature, commonly lie in DARKNESS; the darkneſs of voluntary *ignorance*. Indolence ſmooths their pillow, and ſilences their pavilion. Their eyes are cloſed by prejudice, and the curtains

drawn around them by pride and preſumption. The opiates of vanity, of worldly eaſe and pleaſure, ſuperinduce a kind of trance. Sealed are their eye-lids, but their ſleep is not a quiet ſleep; it is not ſweet and refreſhing, like the ſleep of virtue, the balmy repoſe of health, wearied, at the cloſe of day, with the exertions of beneficence.

It is a ſleep interrupted by dreams. Shadowy, fantaſtic forms, of a thouſand ſhapes and hues, flit before their fancy. *Ambition* has her dreams, *Avarice* her ſpectres, and *Pleaſure* her viſions of ideal bliſs, painted with a glow of colouring, which the pencil cannot emulate.

Crowns and ſceptres, purple robes, crimſon banners, with titles of honour, and armorial bearings, paſs, like a *pageant*, before the courtier, the ſtateſman, the ſenator, the lawyer, the warrior. He fixes his eye upon them devoutly. He catches at them eagerly, as the glittering train moves on. They elude his graſp. He catches again. The air-drawn baubles vaniſh. Again he

is

is diſappointed. Still he perſeveres; and with aching heart, and trembling knees, and palſied hand, he reaches, at laſt, with great difficulty, a coronet, a ſtar, a rib-band, and places it on his ſhaking head, or his throbbing boſom;—then, ſtumbling on the dark mountains, down he falls, ſtripped of all his bluſhing honours and his gorgeous robes. Clad in a ſhrowd, and with a few vain words engraved on his coffin-plate, he is thruſt, leſt he ſhould become noiſome, into a mouldy vault, to rot and be forgotten HERE, where *alone* he ſought diſtinction; and to appear all ſhivering and naked, before Chriſt, his judge; of whom he never once thought ſeriouſly, during the deep ſleep, and the long day-dreams of a vain, worldly, irreligious life.

Behold another dreamer, with a hoary head, lying down to reſt, not on ſoft *pillows*, but on bags of gold. It is the miſer; he dreams that the pale ſpectre of haggard poverty is purſuing hard after him; a cold ſweat bedews his emaciated cheeks, and his teeth ſhake; but

he is cheered again by dreaming of bargains, uſurious contracts, of joining houſe to houſe, and laying field to field; of ſaving all he gains, of taking advantage of the wants of one, and the ignorance of another, to fill his *enormous cheſt*. And lo! it is now full. Is he happy? and does he uſe it? Does he enjoy it, for the purpoſes it was deſigned? Does he think of God, the giver of all good things? Does he diſtribute it to the poor? No; his joy conſiſts in telling it o'er and o'er, weighing it with ſhaking hands, and viewing it with a dim ſpectacled eye, which can ſcarcely diſtinguiſh a counterfeit from a true coin. At ſome future period, when he ſhall have completed a certain ſum, he dreams that he ſhall build, plant, do good, and be whatever a man ought to be. But the ſleep of death comes on before the dream of life is over, and he is gone. And lo! his heir thruſts him into the ground, with a face of affected grief, that can hardly hide his real joy. Down ſinks the dreaming dotard, into the boſom of

that

that earth to which his mind was prone; his very name rots with his emaciated body; and his ſpirit, all poor, naked, and beggarly, moans and bewails that he laid up no treaſure in heaven; that, in his earthly viſions, he never thought of his ſoul; never felt a deſire for the riches of grace.

And now behold his heir. Poſſeſſed of wealth which he never knew the toil of earning, he becomes a *man of pleaſure*; and he alſo *dreameth a dream*. The banquet is prepared. The wine giveth its colour in the cup. The gaming-table is before him. Noiſe and riot drive away thought and care. The ſinging men and the ſinging women enter. Money is laviſhed on horſes, dogs, ſharpers, buffoons; and no debts regarded but thoſe of falſe honour. His heart dances to the melody of the harp and the viol; he pampers every bodily ſenſe, till pleaſure itſelf is converted into pain or inſenſibility. He dreams on, and ſoon ſees phantoms of pleaſure, the ghoſts of departed

ed joys, dancing, in mockery, before his eyes. His powers of perception decay, his youth and health are departed, and he droops like a hyacinth, broken down by a haſty ſhower, before it has expanded its beauty. Down he ſinks to the earth, into an untimely grave, and mourns, as he retires from the ſhadowy ſcene, that a greedineſs of pleaſure ſurfeited his ſenſes, and robbed him, not only of longer life, but of real enjoyment during its continuance. What preparation did he make to reliſh the pleaſures which flow at God's right hand; the pleaſures of reaſon, the ſweets of benevolence, all-pure, all-ſpiritual, as exquiſite in the enjoyment, as exalted and durable in their nature? Alas! none. He had neither time nor inclination. His ſoul ſlept, while his body waked with a fever; the fine ſenſibilities of the ſpiritual nature were enveloped in ſlumber, while his bodily ſenſes were unnaturally jaded, and prematurely worn out by conſtant vigilance and activity. He drank the cup of pleaſure to the dregs, and the dregs were

were to his palate wormwood, and to his vitals poiſon.

Similar to ſuch ſlumbers and ſuch dreams are the ſlumbers and the dreams of many whom we meet walking in their ſleep, in the ſtreets of the city; whom we behold all lively and active in the gaily-illuminated theatres of pleaſure, in the crowded emporiums of commerce, in the courts of princes, in the ſenate-houſe, in the forum, and at the tribunal. Deeply do they drink the draughts of worldly vanity, which, like doſes of opium, lay them indeed aſleep; but at the ſame time fill them with ſelf-conceit and pride, and diſturb them with dreams, wild as the ſcenes of fairy land. It is not a ſweet ſleep; it is the ſleep of diſeaſe, and reſembles what the phyſicians call the COMA VIGIL, a waking ſlumber, a dangerous ſymptom. Then let no man indulge the firſt tendencies to the ſleep of the ſoul; but rather ſhake off dull ſloth, and hear the voice which calls him like the cheerful herald of the morning: "Awake, thou that

"ſleepeſt,

" ſleepeſt, and ariſe from the dead, and " Chriſt ſhall give thee light." Cheerful, pleaſant, merciful warning! But many, it is feared, are too faſt aſleep to hear it. They are, in their torpid ſtate, like the ſwallows in the winter; but even the ſwallows, when the ſpring calls them forth, riſe from their temporary death in unknown regions, to ſoar with joy and triumph in the fields of æther. The primroſes and violets ſleep on their banks for many months; but when the bland voice of the zephyrs whiſper " ariſe," you ſee them ſpring forth, lift up their heads, and drink the ſun-beams, and the dew of heaven. And ſhall the cold ear of man be deaf to the ſtill ſmall voice of conſcience; and ſhall his eyes be impenetrable to the beams of grace? Many ſeem to have little in their nature of a religious diſpoſition; yet let us not conclude that any of the ſons of Adam, any of the redeemed of Chriſt, are deſtitute of that LIVING PRINCIPLE, which is to be foſtered and cheriſhed even to immortal life. There is in every man

man a ſpark, perhaps a *latent* ſpark, which only requires to be gently blown by the aſpiration of the Holy Ghoſt, to become a clear light, and afford a vital warmth, to guide to all evangelical truth, and to invigorate the mind with faith and hope. There is in every man a ſeed of virtue, goodneſs, and piety, which only requires the divine grace to ſhine upon it, in order to become a flouriſhing plant, exuberant in its fine foliage, beautiful in its bloſſom, abundant in its delicious fruit, ſtriking root deeply in the heart, reaching the heavens with its branches, and vegetating in beautiful verdure to all eternity.

To excite this ſpark, to cheriſh this little tender ſeed of grace, this, O ſons of men, is the work, this the labour. Ariſe, therefore, and be doing, and the Lord be with you.

Let us, then, take an impartial view of our own ſtate, and examine whether many of us are not in the ſtate of ſpiritual ſleeping and dreaming already deſcribed. How paſſes our life? We eat, we drink, we

ſleep.

ſleep. To-morrow and to-morrow the ſame dull repetition: we eat, we drink, we ſleep. So alſo do the poor animals around us, whom we look down upon as our inferiors. How are we employed in the intervals of this vegetative life? We buy, we ſell, we dreſs, we trifle, we viſit, we tell or hear the tale of the day, often a trifling, often a falſe, ſometimes a malevolent one; but in all this, have little other deſign than to paſs away the time without reflection; to forget ourſelves; to hide the proſpect before us—death, judgment, heaven, and hell!

How ſtands the real ſtate of that religion which we profeſs? We learned our catechiſm in our infancy; we read the bible at ſchool; we go to church like others; we hear and repeat our prayers; but have we, indeed, conſidered our religion as our principal concern? Chriſtianity is either true or not true. If we believe it true, it muſt be our chief concern; if not true, then why mock we both God and man by our hypocriſy? But we profeſs to believe it.

it. Have we any ſecret exerciſes of the ſoul in converſe and communion with God? Do we ſpend any time with our own hearts? Have we no ſweet intercourſe with heaven in ſolitude? no fervour of piety, no inward religion, no ſpiritual ſenſibility, no pious ardour, no ſecret ſtore of comfort unknown to the world, and which the world cannot reach, locked up as a precious jewel, in the caſket of the heart? If we have not, we are aſſuredly in that ſtate which requires us to liſten to that animating call, "Awake, thou that ſleepeſt, "and ariſe from the dead;" for dead we are to God; dead to every thing but that vanity which ever terminates in vexation; dead to all thoſe remains of excellence, which have preſerved, amidſt the ruins of human nature, ſome faint veſtige of its original grandeur and grace.

Take away the *ſpiritual life*, and you level man with the brutes. He becomes immediately what the philoſophers of old called him, an animal with two legs, and without feathers. How are the mighty fallen!

fallen! The wings of the eagle are clipped. He no longer eyes the golden ſun, but grovels, like a reptile, on the earth. You not only level him with the brutes. You make him more miſerable than they; for he is ſorely ſenſible of his evils, which they are not; he is ſenſible of his forlorn condition, ſenſible of the ſhortneſs and poſſible evils of life, ſuffers imaginary as well as real woe, and ſees the *gloomy* proſpect before him—the *grave* opening to ſwallow him up, and the poſſibility of ſomething terrible beyond it. If we are but animals, then are we of all animals moſt miſerable!

Since a religious LETHARGY is thus degrading to our nature, thus productive of miſery, let us reſcue ourſelves from it to-day, while it is called to-day; and let no man ſay with the ſluggard, "a little more "ſleep, and a little more ſlumber, a little "more folding of the hands to ſleep." Life ebbs apace. The day is far ſpent to many of us. The night is at hand, when the ſad licence may be allowed to us in that

ſevere permiſſion, "Sleep on, now, and "take your reſt." Your ſun is ſet, to riſe no more. Death's ſcythed, triumphal car, drives on rapidly, and mows down all that ſtand in the way. It is computed, by the ingenious in calculation, that, on the ſurface of the globe, more than *fifty thouſand* mortals, men, women, and children, die every *night*. How ſoon may any one of us make an unit in the thouſands that every hour go down into the pit, and are no more ſeen!

One of the beſt means of exciting ourſelves, is a *due preparation* for the ſacrament of the *Lord's Supper*. Let us never fail to receive it at Chriſtmas, Whitſuntide, and EASTER. We ſhall thus experience a *reſurrection* from the ſleep and death of indifference, to life and hope in Chriſt our Redeemer.

It is, indeed, an alarming ſymptom of the ſpiritual ſlumber, that many of us go on from month to month, and from year to year, without receiving the ſacrament; without ſeeking that myſterious communion between God and our ſouls; without feeling

ing any need of it; without deſiring it; without any hunger or thirſt after it. If we were not wrapt in a deep ſleep, or ſtate of ſtupidity, we ſhould long for it; feel an appetite for the heavenly manna; and come to the Lord's table, as to our daily meals, with eagerneſs and alacrity.

What ſhall we think of thoſe numerous perſons who, from year to year, hear notice given of the ſacrament to be adminiſtered, and pay it not the leaſt attention? who think it a matter which may concern any body but themſelves? How many among the pooreſt of the poor never approached the altar; live and die, without having once received the ſacrament, or ſought any other means of grace? Do they think the rich only are capable of grace; that the rich only have ſouls to ſave; that our Lord, like the world, invites the rich only to his table? Think, did I ſay? Alas! they think little on the ſubject. They are in a deep ſleep; loſt in the night of ignorance. And it unfortunately happens, that if they are awakened at all, it is

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uſually by the call of ſome *enthuſiaſt*, *improperly* called a *methodiſt* *, who leads them from the chilneſs of indifference, to the burning fever of fanatical devotion. Let them rather hear the EVANGELICAL call, and apply it to themſelves without delay; "Awake, thou that ſleepeſt:" and let them obey the friendly voice of him who came expreſsly to preach the goſpel to the poor. Let them prepare themſelves immediately to uſe the means of grace afforded them by the ſacrament of the Lord's ſupper, and be thankful that at that table there are no invidious diſtinctions; that the rich and poor meet together, proſtrate on their knees, before their Maker, partaking his bounty without partiality, and ſupplicating his mercy; all equally poor and helpleſs, without his GRACE.

There are, it ſeems probable, many others among us, who think *themſelves* too *young* to be at all concerned with things ſo *ſerious* as the ſacrament. They go, indeed, to church, but never think

* Methodiſm is deſcribed as "GODLINESS without ORDER."

of the holy communion, becauſe they are too *young* to be *ſerious*. Permit me to aſk, what is the preciſe age at which the care of the ſoul is to commence? When does the minority of the ſoul terminate? If all are exempt who are young, and who *think* themſelves young, how great will be the number! Is not going to church, a *ſerious* thing? They do not think themſelves too young to go to church. May it not then be ſuſpected, that as they think themſelves unconcerned with the ſacrament, they may alſo think themſelves unconcerned with the prayers and the diſcourſes of the church; and ſo may frequent the church, merely to diſplay their external garb, to gaze and to be gazed at, to paſs away an idle hour, and to comply with an eſtabliſhed cuſtom. But if there be truth in Chriſtianity, they are trifling with the moſt important matters, in a moſt dangerous manner. They are *acquiring a* HABIT *of conſidering the moſt ſacred things with* INDIFFERENCE. If they are too young to think of *ſerious* things, they certainly are not too young to die. Let them take a walk

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in the church-yard, and read the inſcriptions on the tomb-ſtones. They will find, perhaps, as many *young* as old, among the victims of death; and they muſt allow that youth is a more *dangerous* ſeaſon, with reſpect to *temptations*, than any other; and conſequently, that it more particularly requires the ſuccours of divine grace, to keep it from falling into ſin and miſery. And what ſo powerful a means of grace as the ſacrament, after a due preparation?

No; you are not too young to receive the divine bleſſing of grace. Only be ſenſible how much you want it; how wretched and how profligate you may become; into what ſhameful and dreadful conduct you may fall, without it. Awake, therefore, from a ſleep, which you cannot indulge without loſing the *morning of life*; the beſt ſeaſon for every kind of work, ſpiritual as well as worldly. Begin well, in order to end well. Remember your Creator in the days of your youth, and he will not forget you in the days of your old age. Truſt not in beauty. Truſt not

in ſtrength. Beauty alone has no charms in the eye of Heaven. Strength of body cannot avail againſt the arm of offended Omnipotence. But beauty and ſtrength, combined with virtue and piety—how lovely in the ſight of men! how pleaſing to Heaven—peculiarly pleaſing, becauſe, with every temptation to deviate, they voluntarily walk in the path of duty.

There is another claſs yet, with whom I ſhall expoſtulate on the propriety of receiving the ſacrament, which they are but too apt to neglect, apparently from an idea that they have no concern in it. They claim to be lookers-on, like ſpectators at a conteſt for life and death, without any intereſt in the event. I mean the numerous perſons who fill the very uſeful and creditable ſtation of ſervants and dependants, apprentices, and labourers for hire. Theſe are apt to conſider *Sunday* merely as a *holiday*, or rather vacation from labour; a day, in which they are to adorn themſelves above their rank and ſtation, and to ſacrifice

crifice to the idols of falſe pleaſure and expenſive vanity. To think of the ſacrament, or any other ſerious, affecting duty, on a day devoted to feaſting, to jollity, and to wandering from houſe to houſe, would throw a gloom upon it, inconſiſtent with their ſchemes of enjoyment. Thoughtleſſneſs and folly mark their conduct on that day, more than on any day in the week; a day intended for their improvement in all virtue, honeſty, and true wiſdom. What! have they not ſouls, as well as their ſuperiors in rank? Is not our God their God? Did not Chriſt die for them, as well as for their maſters or employers? Think of theſe things, and let not the ſabbath-day, intended to promote your ſalvation, contribute, more than any other day, to your deſtruction. Would you have it a day of pleaſure? In order to be ſuch, let it be a day of innocence, a day of devotion, a day of rational, ſober, diſcreet recreation.

Think not that religion will deſtroy your cheerfulneſs. No; it will promote it.

Nothing gives ſo fine ſpirits as a clear conſcience; a boſom that feels the ſatisfaction of having diſcharged its duties to God and man. Then recreation and harmleſs pleaſure are truly delightful. The ſweet, in ſuch circumſtances, is without bitter; the roſe without a thorn; the honey without a ſting. I have ever recommended a *cheerful religion*; becauſe all religion was certainly intended to make men happy; and becauſe gloomineſs, moroſeneſs, and ſeverity, which ſome perſons require in religious duties, originate in weakneſs and error, and lead to folly, miſery, and madneſs; to all that is deſpicable or deplorable. As religion is the comfort, ſuperſtition and fanaticiſm are the bane and curſe of human nature. Let us ever beware of exceſs, even in good and laudable purſuits; for wiſdom, and virtue, and happineſs, all dwell with the golden mediocrity. Our exhortations to religion muſt indeed be warm and animated; becauſe the greater part of men err, rather in not reaching the deſirable point, than

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by going beyond it. Yet cautions are alſo neceſſary, leſt the willing, the zealous, the tender-hearted, ſhould be urged, by their own ardour and by perſuaſion, to dangerous and unhappy extremes.

We have, I think, ſeen that the lively, animating ſummons contained in the words, "Awake, thou that ſleepeſt," is neceſſary to a great part of mankind, whoſe feelings are become callous; and who (to repeat the emphatic words of ſcripture) have a heart of ſtone, inſtead of a heart of fleſh; neceſſary to many, who are, upon the whole, commendable for the general decency and propriety of their conduct in the world, as the world is now circumſtanced. Even good kind of people, as they are called, and appear to men, are not ſufficiently awakened to the calls of religious duty. They acquieſce in decencies, decorums, plauſibilities, and the cold formal morality which may be practiſed on the moſt ſelfiſh motives, for worldly intereſt, for health, and for pleaſure. They are not ſufficiently

ſenſible of the *goſpel* truths, its great promiſes, and its dreadful denunciations of vengeance. They are virtuous heathens; followers of the religion of nature, not that of Chriſt. The world approves them, and therefore they approve themſelves; but can the world ſave them? Can they ſave themſelves? No; aſſuredly, if Chriſtianity be not a fable, they muſt come to Chriſt for ſalvation.

Perſons who live in pleaſure, that is, who make vain and ſenſual pleaſure the SOLE buſineſs of their lives, are expreſsly ſaid, in ſcripture, to be DEAD while they live. They appear with ſmiles of *perpetual* gaiety; are often furniſhed with riches and honours; but yet, in the ſcripture ſenſe, they are dead, if they are not alive to Chriſt. What avail their worldly ornaments? The SOUL takes no real delight in them, becauſe it naturally aſpires to higher things. So have I ſeen a noſegay of tulips, and pinks, and roſes, put into the cold hand of a dead corpſe, in a coffin, while the poor

image

image of what once was man, could neither ſee the gaudy tints, nor ſmell the fragrance.

Shall we then not cry aloud, as we are commanded, in the hope of *awakening* ſuch unthinking perſons to a ſenſe of their own miſerable condition, and the hopes afforded by the goſpel? Happy for ourſelves and our fellow-creatures, if we could addreſs a ſlumbering world with the trump of an archangel, uttering theſe enlivening words, "Awake, thou that ſleepeſt, and "ariſe from the dead; and Chriſt ſhall "give thee light."

All perſons whatever, however decent and moral, that are in an *unregenerated* ſtate, are repreſented, in the ſtrong metaphorical language of ſcripture, as DEAD; but happily it is a death from which we may raiſe ourſelves by PRAYER; and returning life will be cheriſhed by heavenly influence.

For what ſays the friendly call? "Chriſt "ſhall give thee light." The ſun of righteouſneſs ſhall ſhine into the dark chambers of thy boſom, diſpel the ſhades of igno-

rance, and diſperſe the phantoms of folly and vanity that ſported in the ſunleſs region. Think, poor darkling mortal, what is promiſed thee! "Chriſt ſhall give thee "light." As the ſun in the morning breaks into thy chamber windows, and thou ariſeſt from thy bed to feel his genial beams, and ſee all nature re-aſſuming her beautiful colours; ſo the light of Chriſt, the light of grace, ſhall beam upon the ſoul, by the operation of the *Holy Ghoſt*, and thou ſhalt ariſe, and ſee the truth as it is in Jeſus—ſee the beauty of holineſs—the day-ſpring from on high—feel new vital warmth glowing in thy boſom; and "*though you have lien among the pots* *," (in the mire and rubbiſh of worldly vanity,) "yet ſhall you be as a dove, which hath "ſilver wings, and her feathers like gold."

After living the few days of our pilgrimage thus *awake* to God, *awake* to Chriſt, *awake* to the bleſſed influences of the Holy Ghoſt, your body, indeed, ſhall lie down, and pay that debt to nature which

* Pſalm lxviii. 13.

we muſt all pay; yet your ſoul ſhall ſeparate from it, (though not without a pang, yet) FULL OF HOPE. Old age, or diſeaſe, or accidents, will indeed bring your poor, frail, periſhing fleſh (for ſuch is that of the ſtrongeſt, the youngeſt, the moſt beautiful of us all) to the grave; your bones muſt lie down in the duſt, from which they were taken, and the mourners ſhall go about the ſtreets; but let them not mourn *without hope.* Thy fleſh ſhall reſt in hope; peaceful ſhalt thou ſleep till the morning of the reſurrection; when the trumpet ſhall ſound, and a voice ſhall be heard, ſweeter than the ſweeteſt muſic to the reviving ear: "Awake! awake! "thou that ſleepeſt, and ariſe from the "dead, and I will *give thee light, life, glory,* "*and immortality.* Sleep no more!— "Ariſe, put on thy beautiful garments! "—My glory is riſing upon thee. Go— "bleſſed Spirit,—and, in the veſture of a "new and glorified body, ſhine among the "ſpirits of juſt men made perfect—thy- "ſelf a Spirit, an immortal Spirit. Sleep

" no more in the arms of death; for death
" is ſubdued; and, as, like a faithful ſol-
" dier, you watched with me in the mi-
" litant ſtate, you ſhall now join me in
" the triumphal. Sleep no more the ſleep
" of death; but riſe, and exult in light
" ineffable!"

SECTION LV.

On the PEACE OF GOD, *that calm and compoſed State, which is produced by the* CHRISTIAN PHILOSOPHY, *and is unknown to the Epicurean, Stoic, and all other Philoſophy, antient and modern.*

A GENERAL proſpect of human life preſents a ſcene of turbulence, of which the troubled ocean is an emblem. But there is a ſweet, a peaceable, a tranquil ſtate of ſelf-poſſeſſion, whether external circumſtances are proſperous or adverſe, which conſtitutes the moſt ſolid happineſs of which human nature is capable. This enjoyment, ariſing from moderate deſires, a regulated imagination, lively hopes, and full confidence in the Deity, is that *chief good*, which philoſophers have vainly ſought in the ſchools, by the ſtrongeſt efforts of unaſſiſted reaſon. What then can point it out, if *reaſon*, improved by ſcience

to

to the higheſt degree, has not been able to find it? The anſwer is obvious. The religion of Jeſus Chriſt offers to its ſincere votaries the PEACE OF GOD, *which paſſeth all underſtanding*; a kind and degree of happineſs, which no language can clearly expreſs; which the underſtanding cannot adequately conceive, though the heart can *feel* it, with the moſt delightful experience.

"The peace of God," (ſays the world,) "what is it?" They know it not. Many have no conception of happineſs, independent of external circumſtances; the toys of childhood, protracted to age. They do not ſearch for it in themſelves, but in the eyes of the world. All their enjoyments muſt be violent, ſenſual, or, at leaſt, OSTENTATIOUS. Admire them, talk of them, flatter them; let the diurnal papers exhibit their names in capitals, and faſhion crowd to their door; let their equipages be ſplendid, and their manſions magnificent, their egreſs and regreſs recorded in the daily hiſtories, or they ſicken in the midſt of health; they pine in the

the midſt of abundance; the roſe on their boſom loſes its fragrance; the honey on their palates, its flavour. To be *celebrated*, even for folly, even for vice, is to them an enviable NOTORIETY; to be unnoticed in public circles, in the midſt of every real bleſſing and ſolid comfort at home, infuſes a bitter into all thoſe ſweets, which God in his bounty has laviſhed.

But the felicity ariſing from the PEACE OF GOD is neither the tumultuous extaſy of the fanatic, nor the noiſy merriment of the prodigal. It ſeeks no plaudits; it makes no parade. It blazes not out like the ſudden eruptions of a volcano; but burns like the veſtal fire, clear and conſtant, with a warmth that invigorates, without ſcorching; with a light that illuminates, without dazzling the viſual faculty.

Thus deſirable, how is the PEACE OF GOD to be obtained? It is an important queſtion. Let us enter on the reſearch. If we enter on it with diſpoſitions truly humble and ſincere, there is little doubt but we ſhall experience the truth

truth of that comfortable declaration: "Aſk, and it ſhall be given; ſeek, and ye "ſhall find."

What ſaid the wiſdom of pagan antiquity, on the means of ſecuring PEACE or tranquillity? Much that was plauſible; little to the purpoſe.

It was the advice of an ancient Philoſopher: "Subject yourſelf to reaſon, and "you ſhall be reduced to no other ſub-"jection." Experience, however, has evinced, that human reaſon, under a variety of circumſtances, is too weak and fallible to be depended upon, for the full ſecurity of human happineſs. What he vainly attributed to reaſon, may with juſtice be aſcribed to religion. Religion, duly underſtood, and duly attended to, is capable of giving much of that freedom from paſſion and perturbation, to which philoſophy in vain pretended. Not that I mean to arrogate too much, or claim more than truth and experience will allow, even in favour of religion. While man preſerves the nature which God gave him, he muſt

muſt continue ſubject to the tranſient impulſe of thoſe ſenſations from external objects which excite paſſion, and diſturb repoſe.

All I contend for is, that religion, VITAL RELIGION, the religion of the HEART, is the moſt powerful auxiliary of reaſon, in waging war with the paſſions, and promoting that ſweet compoſure which conſtitutes the peace of God. Reaſon may point out what is right, but ſhe wants AUTHORITY in the minds of moſt men, to enforce obedience to her commands. Here religion ſteps in with majeſtic mien, and gives the ſanction of a law to the dictates of diſcretion.

I recommend, therefore, to him who wiſhes to obtain the peace of God, a *diffidence* in human reaſon, however ſtrong by nature, and however improved by ſtudy. A confidence in it leads to that pride which God reſiſteth. But I mean this *diffidence* to be chiefly confined to the operations of reaſon in *religious* diſquiſitions. Things *above* reaſon are not to be rejected as *contrary*

trary to reaſon, but to be received with a reverential awe, and a devout ſubmiſſion of the underſtanding to the God who gave it.

He, then, who wiſhes to tranquillize his boſom, muſt have recourſe to more powerful medicines than thoſe of an empirical philoſophy. Philoſophy has been tried, from the earlieſt ages to the preſent hour, with little ſucceſs. Philoſophy is cold and inactive. She may influence and direct the underſtanding; but ſhe cannot warm the affections with the love of God and virtue. SENTIMENT is neceſſary to *impel* the heart, to guide or regulate even the virtuous paſſions; and no ſentiment is ſo efficacious for this purpoſe as the *devotional*. *The word of God*, as the ſtrong language of ſcripture expreſſes it, *is quick and powerful, and ſharper than any two-edged ſword, piercing even to the dividing aſunder of ſoul and ſpirit, and of the joints and marrow; and is a diſcerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.*

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From the ſhallow ſtreams of philoſophy, we muſt haſten to the living fountain of the Chriſtian religion. It is the influence of God on the heart of man, the divine operation of the Holy Spirit on the ſpirit of human creatures, which alone can beſtow a *permanent* tranquillity; that peace of God, which paſſeth all underſtanding; that peace, which no human eloquence can clearly explain; which no human ſagacity can, by its own unaſſiſted efforts, procure; but which the devout heart of the believer feels with joy and gratitude.

This is the polar influence which can alone fix the tremulous needle, and point it directly to Heaven; ſtreaming into the heart of man an emanation of divinity.

Let us then take a view of the fruits of the Spirit, as they are beautifully deſcribed by the Apoſtle. *The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long ſuffering, gentleneſs, goodneſs, faith, meekneſs, temperance.*— Theſe lovely virtues have a natural tendency to produce equanimity, ſelf-poſſeſſion, a ſerene, placid, delightful frame

of

of mind, ſuch as the ſages of old conceived, indeed, but could not either procure or communicate. Theſe make an earth a Heaven, and render it evident, beyond a doubt, that the true Chriſtian, after all the boaſts of the gay voluptuary, is the real MAN OF PLEASURE.

The *worldly* man of pleaſure is indeed, for the moſt part, a man of pleaſure only in name. His pains, upon the whole, greatly outweigh his pleaſures; or his inſenſibility, contracted by exceſs, leaves him in the midſt of all that luxury can ſpread before him, in a ſtate very remote from the enjoyments of the temperate, humble, and ſincere believer.

It would not be right to deſcribe things in a declamatory and rhetorical manner, ſo as to violate the truth of repreſentation, for the ſake of maintaining even the cauſe of *religion*. But experience will juſtify me in aſſerting, that the numerous tribes in the gay and elevated circles, who purſue happineſs in diſſipation only, and never think of God, but to ſwear with levity by his name,

name, exhibit many external ſigns of ſingular irritation, and peculiar miſery. They appear to have no reſources in their own boſom. They depend on precarious externals, on the will and co-operation of others, for all their pleaſures. CHANGE OF PLACE is their grand remedy for their uneaſy ſenſations *. Like a ſick man, who turns from ſide to ſide on his bed, in hope of that ſleep which his fever denies, they fly to various ſcenes of public reſort, in the midſt of amuſements, unamuſed; in the midſt of pleaſure, unpleaſed; and reluctantly return to their home, where God

* Lucretius well deſcribes this reſtleſſneſs:

Commutare locum, quaſi onus deponere poſſit.
Exit ſæpe foras magnis ex ædibus ille.
Eſſe domi quem pertæſum eſt, ſubitoque revertit;
Quippe foris nihilo melius qui ſentiat eſſe.
Currit agens mannos ad villam; hic præcipitentur
Auxilium tectis quaſi ferre ardentibus inſtans:
Oſcitat extemplo, tetigit cum limina villæ.
Aut abit in ſomnum gravis; atque oblivia quærit;
Aut etiam properans urbem petit, atque reviſit.
Hoc ſe quiſque modo fugit: at, quod ſcilicet, ut fit,
Effugere haud potis eſt, ingratis hæret, et angit.

LUCRETIUS.

has

has given them a good inheritance. They have uſed, or rather abuſed, all their comforts. They are *glutted* with pleaſure. Nothing has the grace of novelty to recommend it. Behold their diſſatisfied countenances, and their artificial ſmiles, to hide them at the gay places of public amuſement. Their appetite grown dull, this world affording no new joy, and the next never in their thoughts, they are, at firſt, the ſlaves of *folly*, and, at laſt, the victims of deſpair.

How different is it with him who has happily been tinctured with religion in his early age, and learned to ſeek, as his chief good, "the peace of God, which paſſeth "all underſtanding?" *Great peace have they that love thy law* *. I do not affirm that the Chriſtian religion pretends, like the arrogant philoſophy of the ſtoics, to place man out of the reach of evil, or to render him inſenſible of miſery. A certain portion of evil and miſery is to be the lot of every mortal; and wiſe purpoſes are

* Pſalm cxix. 165.

effected

effected by chaſtiſement, when ſuffered to operate in its regular manner in the production of humility, godly ſorrow, repentance, and amendment. But this I ſay, and am juſtified in the aſſertion by the ſcriptures of God, and by the experience of many pious believers, there is nothing which can leſſen the evils of life ſo much, or teach a man to bear them with ſuch fortitude, as a full dependence on God, and a habit of ſeeking pleaſure in warm yet rational devotion. It will ever be found by thoſe who *thus* ſeek it faithfully.

It is not, indeed, to be believed, but that God, whoſe Providence ſuperintends the animal and vegetable world, and the inanimate creation, ſhould watch over the ſpiritual with peculiar care, and conduct it by his immediate influence. A ſoul, therefore, which, by piety and charity, humbly endeavours to obey the revealed will of God, and to render itſelf acceptable to the eye which is too pure to behold iniquity without offence, will probably be ſure of *peculiar* regard. No evil ſo great

ſhall

ſhall happen to it; no misfortune ſo heavy ſhall befall it, but that a way to eſcape ſhall be opened, or a ſupernatural power of bearing it afforded. A ray of ſunſhine will beam upon it from the fountain of ſpiritual light, when the world preſents nothing but dark clouds. Like the Alpine mountain, the good and devout Chriſtian riſes above the clouds, and enjoys a glorious ſunſhine, which erring mortals below him cannot partake. He who enjoys the peace of God, may be ſaid to reſemble the halcyon, whoſe neſt floats on the glaſſy ſea, undiſturbed by the agitation of the waves.

Men deem themſelves fortunate in obtaining the patronage of a fellow creature like themſelves, elevated by the favour of a prince, or by his own induſtry, above the common level. They feel themſelves ſafe, under his protection, from the evils of poverty. Yet what is the protection of man, of princes and nobles, to the protection of the Lord of Lords, the King of Kings, the Ruler of Princes? But

the pious Chriſtian believes firmly that he enjoys the unſpeakable advantage. It is a continual feaſt to him. It is a perennial ſpring of living water. In adverſity or proſperity, his CHIEF GOOD remains like the mountain, which cannot be moved. It is the rock of ages, on which he builds the fair fabric of his felicity.

What is there, in all the pomp of the world, and the enjoyments of luxury, the gratification of paſſion, comparable to the tranquil delight of a *good conſcience? It is the health of the mind.* It is a ſweet perfume, that diffuſes its fragrance over every thing near it, without exhauſting its ſtore. Unaccompanied with this, the gay pleaſures of the world are like brilliants to a diſeaſed eye, muſic to a deaf ear, wine in an ardent fever, or dainties in the languor of an ague. To lie down on the pillow, after a day ſpent in temperance, in beneficence, and piety, how ſweet is it! How different from the ſtate of him, who reclines, at an unnatural hour, with his blood inflamed, his head throbbing with wine and gluttony,

his heart aching with rancorous malice, his thoughts totally eſtranged from him who has protected him in the day, and will watch over him, ungrateful as he is, in the night ſeaſon! A good conſcience is, indeed, the peace of God. Paſſions lulled to ſleep, clear thoughts, cheerful temper, a diſpoſition to be pleaſed with every obvious and innocent object around; theſe are the effects of a good conſcience; theſe are the things which conſtitute happineſs; and theſe condeſcend to dwell with the poor man, in his humble cottage in the vale of obſcurity. In the magnificent manſion of the proud and vain, glitter the exteriors of happineſs, the gilding, the trapping, the pride, and the pomp; but in the decent habitation of piety is oftener found the downy neſt of heavenly peace; that ſolid GOOD, of which the parade of the vain, the frivolous, and voluptuous, is but a ſhadowy ſemblance.

I ſee a crowd, travelling, by *choice*, on the Sunday, (the day of reſt appointed for man and beaſt, by the benevolent being who made them,)

them,) with a ſpeed that almoſt outſtrips the wind. Whither are they haſtening? To the regions of delight; ſome place of modiſh reſort; where the ſound of the viol invites; where the ſong, and the dance, and the feſtive board, promiſe pleaſure without alloy. Join the train awhile, and mark the event. The variety of objects diſſipates care for a ſhort time; but wearineſs ſoon enſues, and ſatiety converts the promiſed pleaſure to indifference, at leaſt, if not to pain. And now they return to their *home*, the ſeat of plenty, with countenances that by no means expreſs *ſatisfaction* at what is juſt paſt; that ſatisfaction which might have been expected, conſidering the preparation, the expence, the haſte, and the eagerneſs, which appeared in the commencement and progreſs of the faſhionable excurſion. Piety, charity, domeſtic comfort, have all been ſacrificed at the ſhrine of Faſhion; and the fickle, unfeeling deity has beſtowed nothing in return, but wearineſs, languor, and a total diſreliſh of the pleaſures of

ſimplicity, the ſweets of innocence, the feaſt of benevolence, and the enlivening ardour of devotion.

To contraſt the ſcene, I picture a regular, reſpectable, religious *family*, ſpending their time, after the performance of their ſocial, public, or profeſſional duties, around the domeſtic fire-ſide, in peace and love. Every countenance is illumined with cheerfulneſs. No tedium, no exhauſted ſpirits, no *pale*, ghaſtly viſages, from the vigils of the card-table; no envious feelings, no jealouſy nor rage at the ſight of ſuperior ſplendor. Pleaſed with a well-ſpent day, they fall on their knees before they retire to repoſe, and thank the Giver of all comfort for the mercies already received; and pray, with humble confidence, for protection in the night, and continuance of mercy during the remainder of life. Cheerful and refreſhed, they riſe in the morning, and go forth to the labours of life, chaunting the carols of pious gratitude. Here is enjoyment of exiſtence; this is life indeed *, with

* *Hoc eſt vivere.*

a perpetual reliſh; not attended with the tumultuary ardours of a fever, but the gentle, pleaſant warmth of ſound health.

You, therefore, who, bleſſed by Providence with profuſion of wealth, are enabled to make *pleaſure* your conſtant purſuit, *try the experiment*, whether *pleaſure* of the pureſt kind is not to be drawn from the fountains of piety and divine love. Amuſements and pleaſures, commonly ſo called, are not to be rigidly renounced. They are not only allowable, but deſirable and uſeful; ſolacing poor human nature in its ſorrows, and promoting, by temporary relaxation, the energies of virtue. But ſurely it is poſſible to retain religious principles inviolate, and to be uniformly actuated by religious ſentiments, in a life occaſionally diverſified by cheerful, and moderate, and innocent amuſements. Only *keep your heart with all diligence.* Let your imagination be pleaſed; your thoughts occaſionally diverted; but let your *heart* be unſeduced from the love of him who firſt loved you. Let your af-

ſections ſtill point, like the needle to the north, wherever the veſſel is blown by the winds, towards God. Your hands may be employed, your tongue employed, your feet employed, in the avocations of ſocial life and civil ſociety; but let your *heart* be at leiſure for the things which belong unto your peace; which will render your life conſtantly cheerful, and your death as little painful as the ſtruggles of nature will admit.

It is never improper to caution the Chriſtian, who ſeeks the *peace of God*, againſt ſuch a degree of *impaſſioned religion* as tends, by its *violence*, to deſtroy all true devotion, or to abbreviate its continuance. There certainly are religious perſons, who, through the diſorder of their imaginations, and weakneſs of judgment, ſeem not to enjoy that *tranquillity*, or *peace of God*, which religion is calculated to produce.

Gentleneſs and moderation contribute to the increaſe as well as duration of our moſt refined enjoyments. We ſee nothing of extreme rigour, nothing of unnatural auſterity,

auſterity, nothing of intemperate ardour, in the devotion of our Saviour or his diſciples; ſo that they ſeem to be no leſs repugnant to the goſpel, than to reaſon and philoſophy. Nothing *violently* paſſionate is durable; no, not even the *ecſtaſies* of religion. Violent paſſion is like a flood after great rains. However it may ruſh in torrents for a day, it will exhauſt itſelf, and dwindle to the ſhallow ſtream, ſcarcely creeping within the banks of its natural channel.

The paſſions are the chief deſtroyers of our peace; the ſtorms and tempeſts of the moral world. To extirpate them is impoſſible, if it were deſirable. But to regulate them by habitual care, is not ſo difficult, and is certainly worth all our attention. Many men do evidently acquire a wonderful command of their paſſions, in the preſence of their ſuperiors, or when their temporal intereſt is concerned. And ſhall we not attempt it in the preſence of God *dwelling in us*, and for an everlaſting intereſt?

The taſk is facilitated by the grace of God, which certainly co-operates with man in every virtuous endeavour. To JESUS CHRIST, then, let us have recourſe, as to the beſt philoſopher. He who ſaid to the ſea, "Be ſtill," will calm our paſſions, as he ſmoothed the waves. Peace was the legacy which he left to his followers. Hear his bland and ſoothing words: "Peace I leave with you; my peace I "give unto you; not as the world giveth "give I unto you." "The work of "righteouſneſs," ſays Iſaiah, "is peace; "and the effect of righteouſneſs, quiet-"neſs and aſſurance for ever." "Grace "and peace be multiplied unto you," ſays St. Peter, "through the knowledge "of God, and of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt."

"Not as the world giveth," ſays our Saviour, "give I peace." The world ſpeaks peace, when there is no peace. Diſſipation, variety of worldly buſineſs, worldly cares, worldly company, riot, noiſe, intemperance, produce a TUMULT, which baniſhes reflection, but cannot cauſe

cauſe ſerenity, ſelf-poſſeſſion, and compoſure. The ſick man, who has recourſe to *opium* and ſtrong drink to lull his malady in a deceitful oblivion, increaſes his pain and his danger.

The Chriſtian ſeeks *peace*, by ſeeking pardon of God by repentance. "Acquaint thyſelf with God, and be at "peace." He ſeeks peace, by keeping a watch on thoſe great deſtroyers of it, his paſſions. On theſe tumultuous waves he pours the oil of Chriſtian love, and they are calm. Thus he lives;—at peace with himſelf, at peace with his neighbour, and at peace with his God.

Thus he lives; and when he quits this earthly ſcene,—(like a river, whoſe banks are flowery, and whoſe waters limpid and ſmooth,)—he glides, unruffled, into the ocean of eternity. Go, then, gentle Spirit, to the realms of peace, and enjoy the peace of God!—in the boſom of *thy* father, and *our* father *. *Very pleaſant haſt thou been*

* John, xx. 17.

unto us *, during the time of thy ſojourning here. Dove-like were thy manners; for the Spirit, which deſcended like a dove, inſpired thee with every amiable diſpoſition, and above all, with the LOVE OF PEACE, national and public, as well as internal: and BLESSED ARE THE PEACE-MAKERS; theirs ſhall be the peace of God which paſſeth all underſtanding, in the KINGDOM of HEAVEN.

In the kingdoms of the *earth*, indeed, there is ſeldom any laſting peace. What Chriſtian but muſt drop a tear over the fertile realms of Chriſtendom crimſoned with human blood; ſhed at the inſtigation of the ſpirit of APOLLYON, or the DESTROYER, taking his abode in hearts which have rejected the HOLY GHOST, the ſpirit of love, the God of peace! May the rulers of the world *receive the Spirit of Chriſt*, and heal the wounds of the PEOPLE; ſo ſhall they experience, in the hour of their own diſtreſs, the peace of God which paſſeth all underſtanding, and their crowns ſhall be immortal.

* 2 Sam. i. 26.

SECTION LVI.

General Reflections on HAPPINESS—ERRORS *in the Purſuit of it*—*No* ſublunary *Happineſs perfect.*—*Chriſt's Invitation to the wretched.*—CHRISTIAN PHILOSOPHY *affords the higheſt earthly Satisfaction.*—*Its* SUMMUM BONUM *is a State of* GRACE, *or the Enjoyment of divine Favour.*

To what purpoſe are laboured declamations on the miſery of man? He can want no ſtudied proofs of a wretchedneſs which he ſees in others, and feels in his own boſom. To expatiate on the ſymptoms of a diſeaſe, without pointing out a cure or an alleviation, is only to add to the pain, by increaſing the impatience, of the ſufferer.

After all the melancholy pictures of human life, it muſt be allowed, that there is much comfort in the world, blended with its miſery. Look abroad, from the library into real life, and you will ſee a general appearance of cheerfulneſs. Though clouds intervene, ſunſhine predominates.

The labourer and mechanic chant over their daily toil; and though they pauſe to wipe the ſweat of their brow, return to their work, after a ſhort but hearty meal, and the ſweeteſt ſlumbers, not only without a murmur, but with alacrity.

The proſpect of reward at the cloſe of a laborious day, the viciſſitudes of reſt and labour, the ſucceſſion of ideas in active employment, the warmth and agitation of the animal ſpirits conſequent on exertion, ſuperinduce a delightful oblivion of care, and render the ſtate of thoſe who are ſuppoſed to be the leaſt happy, the poor and laborious, frequently moſt pleaſurable.

Nor let the higher ranks among us be enviouſly and malignantly miſrepreſented. Many in the *higher* ranks devote their time to buſineſs and pleaſure *alternately*, and though *the harp and the viol, the tabret and pipe, and wine, are in their feaſts** ; yet ſome of them, guided by prudence, moderation, and piety, take a delight, at the ſame time, *in regarding the work of the Lord, and conſidering the operation of his hands* † ; ſuf-

* Iſa. v. 12. † Ibid.

fering

fering neither *pleaſure* nor buſineſs to interrupt their endeavour to improve in grace, and to exerciſe themſelves in works of devotion and charity. With reſpect to CHARITY, which diſtinguiſhes this age and nation above all nations on the face of the earth, by whom are the great eſtabliſhments for all infirmities and caſualties raiſed and ſupported, but by the rich and noble, by ſucceſsful men in buſineſs, who moſt benevolently endeavour to communicate the happineſs to which they were born, or with which Providence has bleſſed their exertions? Happy in themſelves, they endeavour to deſerve or ſanctify their proſperity, by imitating him who gave it, in acts of moſt diſintereſted *beneficence*. For a proof of this, look into our public diaries, and the regiſters of great charities; and ſee how eagerly the rich and great *contribute* to their ſupport.

So that, upon the whole, there is certainly an *appearance* of goodneſs and of joy on the face of human affairs; and this appearance, in many caſes, is, moſt certainly, ſupported by reality. The world

world abounds with good as well as evil. Our own diſpoſition and diſcontent too often poiſon and embitter the rich repaſt.

It is indeed evident that there is more good than evil in the world. Plenty is certainly more common than ſcarcity; health than ſickneſs; eaſe than pain. And this is ſo far confirmed by experience, as to render the deſcriptions of human miſery, which we read in declamatory harangues, worthy of little credit and attention. Few, *comparatively*, know what it is to be completely miſerable. Who of us, in this country, does not every day enjoy ſome ſolid comfort? A vaſt majority is warmly clothed, plentifully fed, and accommodated with a houſe for ſhelter, and a bed for repoſe.

Yet let the balance be held evenly. There is, we all experience, an abundance of evil in the world; and it is aggravated and actually increaſed by fear, and the activity of a lively imagination.

It is true alſo, that the beſt of our pleaſures and enjoyments are rather amuſive, than

than perfectly and durably ſatisfactory. For who ever declared himſelf, in the midſt of grandeur, pleaſure, opulence, happy to the utmoſt extent of his wiſhes? Who but, in ſome moments, has felt a ſentiment of diſcontent? Who ever ſaid, "I am now in that ſettled ſtate of enjoy-"ment and perfect contentment, that I "conceive not a wiſh of addition to "it; I look not to a future day for an in-"creaſe: I acquieſce; free at once from "hope and from fear?" An involuntary ſigh riſes in the height of our proſperity.

I ſhall think myſelf not uſeleſsly employed in the endeavour to diſcover the cauſes of man's failure in ſearch of ſatisfaction. What is it that daſhes his ſweeteſt and moſt plentiful cup with a bitter mixture?

In the firſt place, man raiſes his expectations too high; beyond what nature and experience juſtify; when he ventures to promiſe himſelf any happineſs without defect, and without abatement; a ſun without ſpot; a ſky without a cloud. The world is not our home. The world is now old; and

and the experiment of attaining to perfection of happineſs has been tried by every individual that ever exiſted in it. Many have left on record an account of their experiments, and an uniform avowal of diſappointment. He, therefore, that would taſte the happineſs allowed to human nature, muſt learn to take aim at marks within his reach, to be duly ſenſible of little advantages and common bleſſings daily, exemption from evil, from pain, from debt, from extreme want, from infamy, from exile, from impriſonment. How much happier is he who has a ſufficiency of food, of raiment, a comfortable houſe, and a warm bed, than millions of the human race, in ſavage climes! Yet theſe things are little thought of by thoſe who murmur at the evils of life, and pine with the miſery of their own ſituation. Something unpoſſeſſed ſtill torments; yet all wiſh to APPEAR happy.

Many things which, in the midſt of our complaints, we poſſeſs and enjoy in ſecurity, would perhaps render half of our fellow-

fellow-creatures rapturouſly delighted, though they, who were born to them, pay them not the leaſt attention, in the eagerneſs of reaching after ſomething *more*, ſomething *higher*, ſomething *better*, to be enjoyed at a *future* day; that day, which never comes, to mortal man. The poſſeſſion of our SENSES entire, of our limbs uninjured, of knowledge and ſkill, of friends and companions, is often overlooked, though it would be the ultimate wiſh of many, who, as far as we can judge, deſerve it as much as ourſelves.

Men always compare themſelves with thoſe who are above them, without once looking into the vale below, where thouſands ſtand gazing at them with envy and admiration. By this unfortunate compariſon, their own good things loſe much of their value in their own eſteem, and ſometimes become totally inſipid.

When we conſider the number and variety of evils, almoſt intolerable, in the life of man, we ſhould learn to eſteem every diſaſter incident to human nature, which has

has not yet fallen to our lot, as a juſt cauſe of ſelf-congratulation, complacency, and gratitude. But, through ENVY, we turn from the misfortunes of others; and think only of thoſe advantages which give them a ſuperiority over our own condition. If we ſee a man deaf, or dumb, or blind, or lame, or poor, or in diſgrace, we do not derive comfort from the conſideration of our own exemption from his defects and calamities; but if we obſerve another adorned with beauty, endued with ſtrength, elevated to a high rank, or loaded with riches, we ſecretly repine that we have not been equally bleſſed with worldly proſperity.

But let us conſider how many there are, who would envy every one who has but health and liberty. Go into an hoſpital. Viſit a poor-houſe. Inſpect a priſon. Compare your own health, your own competency, your own liberty, hard as you deem your lot, with the friendleſs wretch, who lies in the agony of pain, or languor of diſeaſe, with no help but the cold hand of OFFICIAL charity. No kind relative

relative to ſooth with his bland voice, to cloſe his eyes, and ſhed a tear on his departure. Compare your lot with his who is loaded with chains, where the iron enters his ſoul, in a cold and damp dungeon. Compare it with that of your poorer neighbours, at the next door. Compare it with that of all the ſons and daughters of affliction, a large family—every where to be found.

Men are, indeed, too apt to deſpiſe what are called little advantages, common comforts, daily pleaſures, hourly conveniencies; whereas they are often of the higheſt importance; as the general happineſs of life is uſually made up of particulars, which appear minute, but the ſum of which makes a great total.—We wait till to-morrow to be happy; alas! why not to-day? Shall we be younger? Are we ſure we ſhall be healthier? Shall we ſee better, hear better, taſte better? Look at ſome aged miſer, and judge. Then why, in the name of reaſon, cannot we be happy to-day, with a competency and a clear conſcience?

We

We are unwilling to be ſatisfied with the pleaſures of ſimplicity, and the delights of nature. The beaſts around us are contented. The lark ſoars, and ſings in exultation; but man, forgetful of nature, muſt have recourſe to *art*, to procure ſatisfaction; and things ſeem to have little reliſh, which are not ſeaſoned by difficulty of attainment. The greater part of worldlings, eſpecially gameſters, eſteem mere tranquillity of mind, and eaſe of body, a ſtate of inſipidity.

But, conſidering the number of evils in life, man ſhould learn to eſteem every one which he has eſcaped, a juſt cauſe of ſelf-congratulation and of gratitude. The abſence of evil is a real good. Peace, quiet, exemption from pain, ſhould be a continual feaſt. The aching of a tooth may deprive us of all complacency in the midſt of plenty and magnificence. A fit of the gout or ſtone may make a crown of gold and emeralds, a crown of thorns. Then while we have no pain, no ach, no ſickneſs, why do we not enjoy our tranquillity with pious exultation?

Here

Here ſeems to be the grand error. There is a more general deſire to *appear* happy, than to *be* ſo. Men live in the eyes of their neighbours. They wiſh to poſſeſs a *glittering* happineſs, careleſs of its ſolidity. They are deſirous of being *envied, talked of*; and, in reaching after the ſhadow, they drop the ſubſtance.

Such, and many more, are the miſtakes of men, *in the purſuit of happineſs*. They all originate from a deſertion of truth and ſimplicity; from a neglect of God and grace; from vanity, pride, folly, and vice.

But even the wiſe, the virtuous, the religious, and the comparatively happy, are ſtill no more than *men*; and, being men, are ſubject to much *real* miſery, to bodily pains, diſeaſes, infirmity, decay, and worldly loſſes and croſſes. The gardens of the world produce only deciduous flowers. Perennial ones muſt be ſought in the delightful regions of Heaven. Roſes without thorns are the growth of Paradiſe alone.

Thither then let us repair. And, happily, we are called by an invitation, no leſs urgent

urgent than kind and merciful. "Come "unto me," ſays a friendly voice, "all "ye that labour and are heavy laden, and "I will give you reſt*." Let us conſider the words properly, and allow them their full weight upon our hearts. The Redeemer of mankind, commiſſioned from the Creator, utters, from his own mouth, the gracious ſummons, "Come unto "me." As if he had ſaid:

"Your own wiſdom, your ownendea-"vours, unaſſiſted, are inſufficient to ſe-"cure your happineſs, and reſcue you from "miſery. *Come unto me, all ye that la-"bour and are heavy laden, and I will "give you reſt.*" And who is there among us that does not labour? and who is there that is not heavy laden? and who does not want reſt in the pilgrimage of life? The burden of our ſins, the burden of our diſeaſes, the burden of our years, preſs heavily on us, and gladly would many reſign their lives in wearineſs, if there were no danger of a world unknown;

* Matt. xi. 28.

where

where heavier burdens may await him who impatiently throws down the load of life.

Thanks be to God that Jeſus Chriſt will either lighten our load, or give us ſtrength to bear it. He has reconciled us to God; he has taught us to conſider our Maker as our friend and father; and that all things will work together for our good. "Who "will ſhew us any GOOD *?" Jeſus Chriſt *has* ſhewn us our SUPREME GOOD.

At his departure from us, he left us not alone; but ſent his comforter to us—the Holy Spirit of God; who will continue with all true Chriſtians, even to the end of the world. It is he who preſerves a lively, energetic devotion in us; and not only ſanctifies and comforts, but illuminates our ſouls with the beams of grace. The *happineſs* of man, after all that has been ſaid upon it, depends upon a participation of this holy aſſiſtance; upon the divine paraclete, the God of conſolation: and the *miſery* of man is SPIRITUAL DESERTION.

Here then let us reſt. Adieu to the diſtraction of philoſophy; the never-

* Pſalm iv. 6.

ceaſing

ceaſing diſputes of unaſſiſted reaſon; the dogmatical deciſions of learned pride and empty vanity. To be happy, we muſt be bleſſed with the preſence of the Holy Spirit. In adverſity, in proſperity, in ſickneſs, and in health, our joys will be pure, our ſorrow lightened with this holy emanation of the Deity in our boſoms. Natural evil we muſt feel; moral evil, and its effects, we ſhall often experience; but there will ſtill remain in our hearts, if regenerated, a cordial drop, a ſource of ſweet enjoyment, of which no external circumſtances can utterly deprive us.

The method of obtaining this bleſſing, is to perform our duty to ourſelves, our neighbours, and our God, with pure hearts, and a ſincere deſire to conform to the will of our Maker. Much time muſt be given to devotion; more to the offices of charity; much to works of induſtry in our calling or profeſſion; while ſome may be indulged to innocent diverſion. The heart will thus be renovated, and that change produced in our diſpoſitions,

which

which is termed, in ſcripture, the becoming a *new man*; and, in the language of theology, *regeneration*.

Little do they know, who are involved in the continual hurry and diſſipation of the world, of this wonderful change in human nature, and its heightening effect on the enjoyment of life. Buſineſs and diverſions can afford no delight comparable to the ſweet ſenſations of a *ſoul compoſed* and *tranquillized* by divine grace. In this ſtate, a charming ſerenity diffuſes itſelf over the mind, which becomes like thoſe happy climes of poeſy, where every breeze is gentle as a zephyr, the ſpring perpetual, and the earth teems, at the ſame time, with flowers of the fineſt hue, and fruits of the moſt delicious flavour. Nothing ſublunary, indeed, is perfect; but there is every reaſon to believe, that the ſtate of the regenerated Chriſtian approaches as nearly to the bliſs of Heaven, as it is poſſible, while the ſoul is incumbered with a mortal body.

We ſet out in ſearch of happineſs, and here we have found it. The queſtion "who will ſhew us any good* ?" is now anſwered. The CHIEF GOOD of man is a ſtate of grace. Other pretenſions to it are like ſhadows to the ſubſtance; which they may reſemble in ſhape, while they want its eſſence, its duration, its ſolidity. What we have found, let us never loſe. Let us build upon a rock. Let us daily grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt. Thus ſhall our happineſs in this life, founded, as it will be, in piety, virtue, and the conſequent favour of God, riſe to more perfect happineſs in a future ſtate, where the paſſions and appetites of a mortal body ſhall not weigh down the pure ethereal Spirit that, in its *preſent* ſtate, with wings all too feeble, continually aſpires at its native clime.

Come then, ye who have wandered, like bleating ſheep, diſtreſſed and famiſhed,

* Pſalm iv.

miſhed, without a ſhepherd, come to Jeſus Chriſt, to the ſhepherd of your ſouls, who ſhall feed you in a green paſture, and by the river ſide. Come unto him, for he calls you, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and he ſhall give you reſt; reſt, in your paſſage through this turbulent ſcene; and not only reſt, but fulneſs of joy at his right hand, when your wearied bodies ſhall lie down in the peaceful grave.

SECTION LVII.

Apologetical Concluſion; with a Recapitulation, and Addition of a few Particulars reſpecting the preceding Subjects.

THE world, on a ſuperficial view of it, preſents an appearance of gaiety. Deeply engaged in the purſuit of gain, honour, and amuſement, few men would lament, like Calypſo in Telemachus, if they were immortal, and doomed to remain, in everlaſting youth and health, on this low orb, wretched as it is repreſented. But as all are conſcious that this is impoſſible, the next endeavour is to drown thought in the whirlpools of diſſipation. Moſt perſons, however, chooſe to be called Chriſtians, and would be not a little diſguſted with the officious monitor, who ſhould venture to ſuggeſt to them that, as they ſeldom or never beſtow on Chriſ-

tianity the leaſt ſolicitude, they can have no juſt pretenſions to the name.

But buſy as men are, in purſuits foreign to piety, it is certain, that after a few ſhort years, the principal concern of the proudeſt, braveſt, and faireſt of the ſons and daughters of Adam, will be *religion*. To that friend, whom many ſlight in the ſeaſon of youth, health, and proſperity, they will (ſecretly, perhaps, but eagerly) fly for ſuccour, in the time of age, ſorrow, ſickneſs, and death. What, indeed, is man, in his moſt flouriſhing ſtate? What, the moſt admired and diſtinguiſhed individual of us all, but an infirm, dependent creature, ſubject, from the cradle, to ten thouſand evils; doomed gradually, often painfully, to decay, and certainly, perhaps moſt deplorably, to die? Second childhood, idiotiſm, inſanity, palſy, blindneſs, deafneſs, lameneſs! ye are powerful preachers to thoſe who mark well your ravages among the ſons of men, once moſt highly diſtinguiſhed for ſtrength, comelineſs, genius, all that charms the

heart, and dazzles the imagination with tranſient brilliancy.

" Think, mortal," ſays the poet, " what it is to die." Think alſo, I add, what it is to ſee thoſe whom we love, die before us; die, agonized with pain, after languiſhing with lingering diſeaſe; to attend them, with all the blandiſhments of affection, without being able to contribute to their eaſe, or add one moment to their exiſtence: Is there any partaker of human nature, however thoughtleſs, who, when he feels, actually brought home to his own boſom, or to his own family, the real calamities, the ſore diſtreſſes of life, will not be anxious to ſeek comfort of religion, to acquaint himſelf with God, and be at peace with him? His proſpect in the world is forlorn and diſmal. It is a barren land, where no water is. Though it flattered him in better days, it now turns away from him in the hour of his utmoſt need. Indeed, if it were ſtill inclined to ſooth him, it has no cordials for his heart, no balſams for his wounded ſpirit. To Heaven only he can

can look for comfort *, and there he will not ſeek it in vain. Religion has confeſſedly

* As examples of men *well known*, and recently in the land of the living, teach more effectually than any precepts and admonitions, I have ſelected the two following, to ſhew how men of the world and men of pleaſure are affected by diſeaſe and the decays of age.

The following verſes, a tranſlation of a Pſalm, by the late Mr. COLMAN, who had been much converſant with the gay world, exhibit the ſtate of mind to which the livelieſt wits and men of faſhion may be reduced, on a ſudden, by ſickneſs, by a STROKE OF THE PALSY, or any other malady.

" Pſalm the 39th imitated in blank verſe :

" I will take heed, I ſaid, I will take heed,
" Nor treſpaſs with my TONGUE ; will keep my
" mouth
" As with a bridle, while the ſinner 's near.
" —Silent I mus'd, and e'en from good refrain'd,
" But full of pangs, my heart was hot within me ;
" The lab'ring fire burſt forth, and loos'd my
" tongue.
" Lord, let me know the meaſure of my days ;
" Make me to know how weak, how frail I am !
" My days are as a ſpan, mine age as nothing,
" And man is altogether vanity.
" Man walketh in an empty ſhade ; in vain
" Diſquieting his ſoul, he heaps up riches,
" Knowing not who ſhall gather them. And now

feſſedly furniſhed a ſweet ſolace, under extreme affliction, when the heart ſickened at

" Where reſts my hope, O Lord! it reſts with thee.
" Forgive me mine offences! Make me not
" A ſcorn unto the fooliſh! I was dumb,
" And open'd not my mouth, for 'twas thy doing.
" O, take thy STROKE away! thy hand deſtroys me.
" When, with rebukes, thou chaſteneſt man for ſin,
" Thou mak'ſt his beauty to conſume away:
" Diſtemper preys upon him, as a moth
" Fretting a garment. Ah, what then is man?
" Ev'ry man living is but vanity!
" Hear, hear my prayer, O Lord! O hear my cry!
" Pity my tears! for I am in thy ſight
" But as a ſtranger and a ſojourner,
" As all my fathers were. O, ſpare me then,
" Though but a little, to regain my ſtrength,
" Ere I be taken hence, and ſeen no more!"

COLMAN.

Let us hear alſo LORD CHESTERFIELD, a complete man of the world. The following is an extract from one of his letters:

" I have run," ſays he, " the ſilly rounds of " buſineſs and pleaſure, and have done with them " all. I have enjoyed all the pleaſures of the world, " and conſequently know their futility, and do not " regret their loſs. I appraiſe them at their real " value, which is, in truth, very low. Whereas " thoſe that have not experienced, always over-rate " them. They only ſee their gay outſide, and are " dazzled

at the pleaſures of the world, and viewed its pageantries with contempt. Bitterer than

" dazzled with the glare. But I have been behind " the ſcenes. I have ſeen all the coarſe pullies and " dirty ropes which exhibit and move the gaudy " machines; and I have ſeen and ſmelt the tallow " candles which illuminate the whole decoration, to " the aſtoniſhment and admiration of the ignorant " audience.

" When I reflect on what I have ſeen, what I have " heard, and what I have done, I can hardly per- " ſuade myſelf that all that frivolous hurry of buſtle " and pleaſure of the world had any reality; but I " look upon all that is paſſed, as one of thoſe roman- " tic dreams, which opium commonly occaſions; " and I do by no means deſire to repeat the nauſeous " doſe, for the ſake of the fugitive dream.

" Shall I tell you that I bear this melancholy ſitu- " ation with that meritorious conſtancy and reſigna- " tion which moſt people boaſt of? No; for I really " *cannot help it.* I bear it, becauſe I muſt bear it, " whether I will or no!—I think of nothing but " killing time the beſt way I can, now that he is " become my enemy.—It is my reſolution to SLEEP " *in the carriage during the remainder of the journey.*"

" You ſee," ſays Biſhop Horne, remarking on this paſſage, " in how poor, abject, and unpitied a " condition, at a time when he moſt wanted help and " comfort, the world left him and he left the world."

than wormwood has been the cup of adverſity; but religion has infuſed a honied drop into it, which has overcome the bitterneſs: gloomy as midnight has been the lowering ſky, but religion has tinged the clouds with gold and purple, and opened a proſpect of the blue expanſe.

But what religion? There is no religion but the Chriſtian, which, in the preſent ſtate of ſociety, can make any claim to general reception. There is none but the Chriſtian, which can afford the ſmalleſt conſolation. Explode Chriſtianity, as ſome pretenders to benevolence ſeem to wiſh, and you rob the blind of their ſureſt guide, and the wretched, of their beſt friend and

Compare theſe words with thoſe of another perſon, who took his leave of the world in a very different manner.

"I am now ready to be offered, and the time of "my departure is at hand. I have fought a good "fight; I have finiſhed my courſe; I have kept "the faith; henceforth there is laid up for me a "crown of righteouſneſs, which the Lord, the "righteous Judge, will give me at that day."

St. PAUL.

protector. You take away the ſtaff of age, the chart and compaſs of youth, the pillow of pain, the grand column and ornament of human life. Man degenerates, without it, to a brute of ſuperior ſagacity to do miſchief, and ſuperior ſenſibility to ſuffer pain.

But there are many, and thoſe able and diſtinguiſhed men in the buſineſs of the world, who appear to reject Chriſtianity entirely. Many give it no attention *; but contented with the decencies of life, and, coldly complying with outward forms, claim a merit in ſubmitting quietly to its ordinances, and making no open oppoſition to it. Others profeſs to believe all religion equally true, equally falſe, and equally uſeful to the politician. Moſt of theſe are probably driven, at laſt, by their diſtreſs, in the evil days, and in the an-

* They know nothing about it, and therefore cannot deſire or ſtudy it. IGNOTI NULLA CUPIDO.—The people periſh through lack of knowledge. Hoſea, iv. 6. The Indians prefer any bauble, which rattles and looks fine, to their mines of gold.

guiſh of their hearts, to ſeek the aid of her, whom they deſpiſed or neglected in proſperity, and to take refuge, during the ſtorm, in the ſhelter of the temple. But is it not deſirable, in every ſtage of life, to be under the protection of one, who is found ſo faithful a friend in the laſt ſtage? And is it not the part of every truly benevolent man, if opportunities offer, and, more particularly, if his PROFESSIONAL DUTY not only juſtifies, but demands, an active interference in promoting the ſolid happineſs of others, to endeavour to perſuade his fellow-creatures to ſeek, in the moſt effectual manner, the light and conſolation of Chriſtianity. He can in no poſſible mode contribute ſo much to the melioration of ſociety, and the improvement of the human race. Look at a neighbouring country, and ſee the miſery conſequent on renouncing Chriſtianity. Mercy and Juſtice ſeem to have fled from the land, together with the Goſpel. God hath avenged his cauſe in a moſt awful manner.

To

To ſtop the progreſs of infidelity, to reſuſcitate the dormant ſpirit of vital religion, the true nature of Chriſtianity muſt be plainly pointed out to the maſs of the people, the GREAT as well as the vulgar; the GREAT, I ſay, to whom, from thoughtleſſneſs, and immerſion in ſenſuality, it is often little known *, however it may be profeſſed. Chriſtianity, indeed, it may be ſuſpected, is too imperfectly underſtood, even by ſcholars, philoſophers, and ſtateſmen of the firſt rank, and the greateſt celebrity †.

To

* What is the GOSPEL? "The record that God "hath given to us eternal life, and that life is in his "ſon." 1 John, v. 2. It is a queſtion of prime importance. Yet there are able men, and men of ſingular addreſs and dexterity in all political and commercial *buſineſs*, who perhaps never aſked the queſtion with ſeriouſneſs; and who ſeem to be merely novices, or downright Ignoramuſes, in the ſchool of Chriſt.

† Let ſuch perſons conſider the *œconomy of grace*, as thus briefly diſplayed by Biſhop Warburton, who, nevertheleſs, was a great oppoſer of the true doctrine of divine energy; and who, on that account, may have the more weight with many.

"The

To call the attention of men to Chriſtianity, and to render its true genius and nature

" The bleſſed Jeſus came into the world to declare " the good-will of our heavenly Father to the " forfeited poſterity of Adam. He teſtified the " truth of his miſſion by amazing miracles; and " ſealed the redemption of mankind, by the more " amazing devotion of himſelf to an ignominious " death.

" But as the redemption, ſo generally procured, " could only operate on particulars, under certain " circumſtances of faith and obedience, very repug- " nant to our corrupted nature, the bleſſed Jeſus, " on his leaving the world, promiſed his followers " his interceſſion with the Father, to ſend another " divine perſon—the Holy Ghoſt, called the *Spirit* " *of Truth*, and the *Comforter*—who, agreeably to " the import of thoſe names, ſhould *co-operate* with " us in eſtabliſhing faith, and in perfecting obedi- " ence; or, in other words, ſhould ſanctify us to " redemption.

" This is a ſuccinct account of the œconomy of " grace; entirely conſonant to our beſt conceptions " of the nature of God, and the condition of man. " For if man was to be reinſtated in a free gift, juſtly " forfeited, we cannot but ſuppoſe that as, on the " one hand, it might be reſtored on what conditions " beſt pleaſed the giver; ſo, on the other, God " would

nature *better known* *, is the ſcope of this little book; a book by no means intended to

" would graciouſly provide, that it ſhould not be " beſtowed in vain.

" An atonement, therefore, was to be made for " the offended majeſty of the Father, and this was " the work of the Son; and a remedy was to be " provided for the miſerable condition of man, " which hindered the atonement from producing its " effect; and this was the office of the Holy Ghoſt; " ſo that both were joint workers in the great buſi- " neſs of reconciling God to man.

" The office of the Holy Ghoſt is to ENLIGHTEN " THE UNDERSTANDING, AND TO RECTIFY " THE WILL." Bp. WARBURTON.

This is the teſtimony of an adverſary.

" The Chriſtian that rejects, reproaches, and " writes againſt the neceſſity of immediate divine " inſpiration, (as Warburton did,) pleads the whole " cauſe of infidelity." LAW.

* " In many countries *called Chriſtian*, neither " Chriſtianity, nor its evidence, are fairly laid be- " fore men; and in places where both are, there " appear to be ſome, who have very little attended " to either; and who reject Chriſtianity with a " SCORN proportionate to their INATTENTION; " and yet are by no means without underſtanding in " other matters." Bp. BUTLER.

" I have

to promote the intereſt, or gratify the pride, of any particular diviſion or ſub-diviſion of Chriſtians, but to ſerve the *common cauſe* of all human beings, by maintaining the divine origin, deſcribing the real eſſence and energy, and diffuſing the powerful efficacy of that SUBLIME PHILOSOPHY, which, under the immediate operation of an all-wiſe and benign Deity, promiſes to tranquillize life, and conduct man through paths of peace, to realms of eternal felicity.

What then is the principle of this philoſophy, which gives it a decided ſuperiority over all that has been taught in the groves of Academus, the Portico and the Lyceum? It is (as I hope has been evinced in the preceding pages) a BEAM OF LIGHT from the FATHER OF LIGHTS; a LUMEN DE LUMINE, LIGHT OF LIGHT; the breath of the power of God, reſtoring degenerate human nature to that image which it loſt at

"I have been ſo long converſant with the claſſics," ſaid Dr. Conyers Middleton, "that I grow *ſqueamiſh* "when I come to the ſcriptures."

the

the fall, and re-eſtabliſhing it in primeval dignity. The Holy Ghoſt, it appears, is the divine Being, now and for ever engaged in effecting this happy renovation; in producing a change, which no human wiſdom could ever accompliſh, without ſupernatural aſſiſtance; without that GIFT, which our Lord gave to men after his aſcenſion.

The elegant refinements of human philoſophy may furniſh a pleaſing amuſement for thoſe who poſſeſs the advantages of a claſſical education, and of literary leiſure. The Chriſtian Philoſophy alone is calculated for ALL mankind; this alone can bring peace * at the laſt; peace, during the continuance of life, as well as at its

* "I would," ſaid the great GROTIUS, whoſe book, 'On the Truth of the Chriſtian Religion,' is recommended to all young ſtudents, though, I believe, it never *convinced* any man living; "I "would," ſaid he, a little before he died, "give all "my learning and honour, for the plain integrity "and innocence of JEAN URICK;" a poor illiterate neighbour of his, who ſpent much of his time in prayer, and was an honeſt plain man, and induſtrious in his calling. JOHN EDWARDS.

cloſe;

cloſe; a tranſcendent peace, called, in ſcripture, the *peace of God, which paſſeth all underſtanding*; and which certainly conſtitutes that SUPREME GOOD OF MAN, in ſelecting which, human philoſophy could never yet finally agree. Happily, it is a kind of philoſophy, to which every human being, conſiſtently with God's equity, may attain; requiring not cultured intellects, nor a life of academical ſecluſion, but faithful, fervent prayer, accompanied with ſincere, though imperfect obedience. "If ye, being evil," ſays our Saviour, "know how to give good gifts unto "your children, how much more ſhall "your heavenly Father give the Holy "Spirit to them that aſk him?" Nothing is to be deſired by mortal man, in compariſon with this GIFT, *the ſupply of the Spirit of Jeſus Chriſt* *. The END, it appears, to be purſued by this philoſophy, is the attainment of the Spirit's influence; the MEANS, prayer and obedience. Such is the ſum and ſubſtance of CHRISTIAN

* Phil. i. 19.

PHILO-

PHILOSOPHY; a title* which I have choſen, becauſe, from a ſtrange perverſeneſs, a great part of the world, too often guided by names, is willing to liſten to philoſophy,

* This name Chriſtianity bears in the writings of ſome of the antient fathers. Thus *Juſtin Martyr*, ſpeaking of Chriſtianity, ſays,

" Εστι τω οντι ΦΙΛΟΣΟΦΙΑ μεγιστον κτημα κ τιμιωτατον
" Θεω, ωτε προσαγει και συνιστησιν ημας μονη· κ οσιοι ως
" αληθως ουτοι εισιν οι φιλοσοφια τον νουν προσεχη κ οτες."
Dialog. cum Tryph.

He adds, that he found this philoſophy, meaning the CHRISTIAN, the only philoſophy that was uſeful, and to be depended upon.

" Ταυτην μονην ευρισκον Φιλοσοφιαν ασφαλητε κ συμ-
" φορον." IBID.

Iſidore alſo terms Chriſtianity the NEW and evangelical philoſophy.

" Η νεα κ ευαγγελικη ΦΙΛΟΣΟΦΙΑ."
EPIST. *lib.* 4.

And in another place he calls it the heavenly philoſophy.

" ΟΥΡΑΝΙΟΣ ΦΙΛΟΣΟΦΙΑ." EPIST. *lib.* 5.

Several other fathers call it the Chriſtian Philoſophy. *Vide* Sozomen. *Eccl. Hiſt. lib.* 5. *cap.* 12.

And let it be remembered, that,

" *Non tam diſcendo, quam* PATIENDO *divina,*
" MENS PERFICITUR HUMANA."

" *Homines*

phy, while it cloſes the iron doors of prejudice againſt the voice of religion.

The divine energy announced to mankind in the glad tidings of the Goſpel, under the name of GIFTS and GRACE, operating, now and for ever more, on every human heart prepared to admit it, appears, from what has been advanced in theſe pages, to be the LIVING, EVERLASTING GOSPEL, ſtill accompanying the written word, and conveying illumination, ſanctification, conſolation. It would not ceaſe to operate, being ſent down from Heaven on our Lord's aſcenſion, even if it were poſſible that ink and paper, by whoſe inſtrumentality the written word is tranſmitted, were utterly loſt. It originates from Omnipotence, and cannot entirely rely, for its continuance or effect, on means merely human, weak, contingent,

" *Homines ideo fallantur, quod aut religionem ſuſ-*
" *cipiunt, omiſſâ ſapientiâ, aut ſapientiæ ſoli ſtudent,*
" *omiſſâ religione, cum alterum ſine altero eſſe non poſſit*
" *verum.*"

LACTANTIUS *de falſa Sapient. lib.* 3.

and

and periſhable. He who once views the goſpel of JESUS CHRIST in this light; he who conſiders it as a vital influence from Heaven, and recognizes its energy on his heart, as he will do, in conſequence of prayer and obedience, will want no other proof of the truth and excellence of Chriſtianity. He will have the witneſs in himſelf; and ſtand in no need of the ſchoolmen's folios, the verbal ſubtleties of the critic, or the acrimonious diſputes of the polemic. He will find, that ſome of the moſt learned men, the moſt voluminous writers on theological ſubjects, were TOTALLY IGNORANT OF CHRISTIANITY. He will find that they were ingenious heathen philoſophers, aſſuming the name of Chriſtians, and forcibly paganizing Chriſtianity, for the ſake of pleaſing the world, of extending their fame, and enjoying ſecular honours and lucrative preeminence *.

" Godly

* " There are thoſe," ſays the apoſtle, " who " ſeek THEIR OWN, and not the things of Jeſus " Chriſt." PHIL. ii. 21.

Such

"Godly perſons," that is, Chriſtian philoſophers, are deſcribed, in thoſe articles which all churchmen have moſt ſolemnly aſſented to, as "ſuch as FEEL in themſelves the Spirit of Chriſt, mortifying "the works of the fleſh, and *drawing up* "*their minds to high and heavenly things.*" He who feels the Spirit in him, will be conſcious of poſſeſſing the pearl of great price, and will lock it up in the ſanctuary of his heart, as his richeſt treaſure, never to be deſpoiled of it by the ſeducing arts of falſe philoſophy; never to exchange that pure gold, which is the ſame yeſterday, to-day, and for ever, for the baſe metal of worldly politicians, who may endeavour, as they have done, to make truth itſelf

Such as theſe are called by Ignatius χριστεμποροι, dealers and chapmen in *Chriſt*. *Unprofitable* TRUTHS they will have no more to do with, than traders with unſaleable commodities.

Biſhop Horne ſays, "Thoſe clergymen, who be-"tray the cauſe of their Maſter, in order to be pro-"moted in the church, are guilty of the worſt kind "of *ſimony*, and pay their ſouls for the purchaſe of "their preferment."

alter

alter her inimitable nature, to ſerve the varying purpoſes of temporary ambition. Thoſe doctrines of Chriſtianity, which were true under the firſt Charles, will be conſidered, notwithſtanding the ſubtle attempts of politicians, equally true under the abandoned profligacy of a ſecond; or in ſubſequent reigns, when it was diſcovered by the court divines, that Chriſtianity *was as old as the creation*, and the religion of grace, a mere republication of the religion of nature *. The ſubſtance

* This, though the pious Sherlock's doctrine, is nearly the ſame with the infidel Voltaire's, though not quite ſo honourable to Chriſtianity.

" *Notre religion revélée n'eſt même, et ne pouvoit* " *être, que cette loi naturelle perfectionée ?*"

Diſcours ſur le Theiſme, par M. de *Voltaire*.

Of preaching *natural religion* for Chriſtianity, let us hear the opinion of two other celebrated divines, and pious men.

" Scarce any thing," ſays Dr. Trapp, " has of " late years been more prejudicial to religion, than " the neglect of the THEOLOGICAL part of it, pro- " perly ſo called: and it is very greatly to be la- " mented, that ſome writers, even of our own " church,

ſubſtance of Chriſtianity can ſurvive the wreck of empires, the demolition of temples made with hands, and the diſmiſſion of a ſuperſtitious or a time-ſerving prieſthood. The living temple of the heart, where the Holy Spirit fixes his

" church, out of an undue terror, in oppoſing ſome " undue doctrines of Calvin, have run into the other " extreme, and have too little regarded the neceſ- " ſary *doctrines of religion.*"

They have dwelt upon the *agenda*, and totally neglected the *credenda*.

" To preach *practical* ſermons, as they are called, " that is, ſermons upon VIRTUES and VICES, with- " out inculcating thoſe great ſcripture truths, of re- " demption, GRACE, and the like, which alone can " incite and enable us to forſake ſin, and follow after " righteouſneſs—what is it but to put together the " wheels, and ſet the hands of a watch, forgetting " the SPRING which is to make them all go?"

Biſhop HORNE *and* Dr. TRAPP, *in his Preface to* " *Preſervative.*"

What Quintilian ſaid, may be applied to moral preaching, when unaccompanied with evangelical.

" *Nunc vero quæ velut propria* philoſophiæ *aſſerun-* " *ter paſſim tractamus* omnes: *quis enim modo de juſto,* " *æquo, ac bono, non et vir peſſimus loquitur.*"

QUINT. Procœmium.

ſhrine,

ſhrine, will ſtand unimpaired, amidſt the fallen columns of marble. The kingdom of Heaven will remain unſhaken, amidſt all the convulſions of this changeable globe. We are told, that the gates of hell ſhall not prevail againſt it; and, though it ſhould happen, in any country of Chriſtendom, that the rulers ſhould be infidels, and the viſible church aboliſhed; yet while there are human creatures left alive in it, the CHURCH of CHRIST may ſtill flouriſh. The doctrine of grace is the only doctrine which tends to preſerve Chriſtianity in the world, independent of the caprice and pride of ſtateſmen * and philoſophers, or the wickedneſs of the people. Who ſhall be impious enough to

* "With great worldly wiſdom, there is always "great pride, the greateſt adverſary to true and "ſanctified Chriſtian knowledge. All the ſkill that "men ſo minded can attain to in heavenly matters, "is but like leſſons got by rote. It muſt be quite "forgotten, or, at leaſt, utterly renounced and laid "aſide, before we can be admitted into the ſchool "of Chriſt." DR. JACKSON, Vol. I. B. 2. C. 14.

maintain that God cannot preſerve, by his own methods, his own diſpenſation?

Civil and eccleſiaſtical power in union, together with the aſſiſtance of early education, may, indeed, retain, in a nation, the forms and the name of Chriſtianity; but "the proper force of religion, that "force which ſubdues the mind, which "awes the conſcience, and influences the "private conduct, as well as the public," will only be preſerved by a vital experimental ſenſe * of the divine energy of the Holy Ghoſt, whom we declare, with one voice, in our churches, whenever we repeat

* "Let it be conſidered that man, beſides the bene-
"fit of reaſon to direct him, is bleſſed with the ad-
"vantage of ſomething, if not always equivalent,
"certainly not inferior to the higheſt refinements of
"INSTINCT in lower animals; and from the ſame
"fountain, I mean GRACE, the grace of God;
"which, if any one be hardy, and UNPHILOSO-
"PHICAL, and *unchriſtian* enough to deny, I ſhall
"not attempt to confute him; only deſire him to
"conſider calmly, whether it be more incongruous
"to ſuppoſe God *aiding* and *directing* reaſonable,
"but fallible beings, with his GRACE, than brutes
"with INSTINCTS." DELANY.

the

the Nicene creed, to be the "LORD AND "GIVER OF LIFE."

I have endeavoured to diffuſe this vital, experimental ſenſe, from a conviction that it is peculiarly deſirable at a time when infidelity is ſaid to increaſe, beyond the example of any former age. But I know that I oppoſe prejudices deeply rooted, and far extended. Theſe doctrines are frowned upon by men in high ſtations *. I know that our Saviour has predicted, what experience has abundantly verified, that the preaching and teaching of the TRUE goſpel, will ever create enemies in the world †. The modes of perſecution differ in different periods; but, in all times, the defenders of *evangelical* truth are expoſed to ſome mode or ſome degree of it.

* "Theſe doctrines ſerve no end of *popular* learn-"ing, they help no people to figure and preferment "in the world, and are uſeleſs to ſcholaſtic, con-"troverſial writers." LAW.

† But I muſt remember that, "the FEAR OF "MAN bringeth a ſnare;—but whoſo putteth his "truſt in the Lord, ſhall be ſafe."

PROVERBS, xxix. 25.

I know it well; yet, "Woe is me," may I and every preacher ſay, "if I "preach not the goſpel *;" the true goſpel; ſuch, at leaſt, as, after the moſt careful ſearch and long conſideration, it appears to my imperfect underſtanding, and ſuch as I believe it to be in my SOUL. I only deſire the adverſary, if any ſuch ſhould ariſe, to allow the poſſibility that he, as well as I and the many great men who ſupport me in my ſentiments, may be miſtaken! and to aſk his own heart, whether he has hitherto ſtudied the ſubject as a truly *humble* † Chriſtian, a fallen, depraved, ignorant, and weak creature; or merely as a ſcholar, critic, philoſopher, logician, metaphyſician, controverſialiſt, or politician, contending for the glory of victorious diſputation, or the rewards of a profeſſion eſtabliſhed and encouraged by the ſtate.

* 1 Cor. ix. 16.

† ANTONINUS taught, that the very firſt requiſite to form a philoſopher, was αποβαλλειν οιησιν, to throw away all CONCEIT of knowledge.

If

If any clergyman* of the church of England ſhould be diſpoſed utterly to deny

* The Rev. Mr. Thomas Edwards, Fellow of Clare Hall, Cambridge, after writing a learned and elaborate book againſt the doctrine of grace, is compelled, by the *force of truth*, at the concluſion of it, to make the following conceſſions:

" There are undoubtedly ſeveral paſſages which " ſufficiently ſhew, that the operations of the Holy " Spirit are not to be entirely limited and confined " to the extraordinary and miraculous gifts and en- " dowments peculiar to the apoſtolic age; but, on " the contrary, that it will, in all ſucceeding ages, " be communicated, in a peculiar manner, to all " thoſe who may ſtand in need of it, in order to the " diſcharge of their duty.

" I can therefore by no means give into their " opinion, who, with the witty French Jeſuit, look " upon theſe ſupernatural workings of the Spirit " upon the minds of man, as entirely viſionary or " chimerical; or, as he expreſſed himſelf, a mere " NESCIO QUID, (*je ne ſçai quoi*). *A tempore Au-* " *guſtini, vix ulla vox frequentior fuit voce* GRATIA, " *ubi ſermo eſt de hominis ad ſaniorem mentem reditu et* " *vi, cui is reditus debetur. Eâ tamen voce quid ſigni-* " *ficetur, cum ab iis quæritur, qui eâ utuntur, nihil re-* " *ſponſi perſpicui ferre licet. Hinc factum ut in Gal-* " *liâ, Jeſuita feſtivi ingenii, non inficetè dixit, 'Gra-* " *tiam illam divinam, quæ tantum ſtrepitum, excitavit*

 " *in*

deny the doctrine of immediate grace, divine energy, and ſupernatural impulſe, I would beg leave humbly and affectionately to remind him of the queſtion propoſed to him when he was ordained a miniſter of Chriſt, and the anſwer he then made, with every circumſtance of religious ſolemnity, receiving the ſacrament upon it, and thus evidently reſting all his hopes of God's bleſſing on his ſincerity *.

" *in ſcholis, et tam mirabiles effectus in hominum ani-*
" *mis edit,* gratiam *illam adeo efficacem, et ſuavem*
" *ſimul, quæ de duritie cordis, illæſâ arbitrii libertate,*
" *triumphat, nihil eſſe tandem, præter* NESCIO
" QUID.' *Clerici,* Ars Crit. p. 2. ſ. 1. c. 8.

" The general manner in which the Spirit ope-
" rates upon men, we may, I humbly conceive,
" ſuppoſe to be, by raiſing *ſuch particular ideas, or*
" *making ſuch particular impreſſions upon their minds,*
" as may *influence them,*" &c.

* " All *ſacerdotal* power is derived from the Holy
" Ghoſt; and they who do not acknowledge them-
" ſelves under the Holy Ghoſt's influence, acknow-
" ledge that they have no ſacerdotal power. Our
" Saviour himſelf took not the miniſtry upon him,
" till he had this conſecration."

We think too *lowly* of the prieſt's office in our age. Very great it is, under the energy of the Holy Ghoſt.

The

The queſtion is, "Do you truſt that "you are inwardly moved by the Holy "Ghoſt, to take upon you this office and "miniſtry, to ſerve God, for the pro-"moting of his glory, and the edifying of "his people?" "I TRUST so," replies the perſon to be ordained.

As the topic is rather invidious, and certainly concerns myſelf as well as any of them whom I have the honour to call my brethren in the profeſſion, I will refer it to Biſhop Burnet, to make remarks on the reſponſe to the interrogatory. "Certain-"ly," ſays the truly able prelate, "the "anſwer that is made to this, ought to be "well conſidered; for if any one ſays, "'I truſt ſo,' that yet *knows nothing* of "any ſuch motion, and can give no ac-"count of it, he lies to the HOLY GHOST, "and makes his firſt approach to the altar "with a lie in his mouth; and that not to "men, but to God. Shall not God reckon "with thoſe who run without his miſ-"ſion, PRETENDING that they truſt they "have it, when perhaps they underſtand

" not the importance of it? nay, and " perhaps ſome LAUGH at it, as an *en-* " *thuſiaſtical* queſtion, who yet will go " through the office. They come to " Chriſt for the loaves; they hope to live " by the altar and the goſpel, how little " ſoever they ſerve at one, or preach the " other; therefore they will *ſay any thing* " that is neceſſary for qualifying them to " (*receive the loaves and fiſhes*), whether true or falſe." The Biſhop's animadverſion is ſevere; and every man's own conſcience muſt whiſper to him, in his own caſe, whether it be juſt and true.

One thing, however, is certain, and ſufficient for my purpoſe. It is plain that perſons who enter on the miniſtry, thus declaring themſelves to *believe* that they are under a ſupernatural *motion* or impulſe, cannot *conſiſtently* deny, or explain away, the main principle of my book, which is the reality of ſuch a ſupernatural motion or impulſe. They confeſs that, in their own perſons, they believe they have experienced that divine energy of the Holy Ghoſt,

Ghoſt, which, I maintain, moves the mind to believe in Chriſt, and inclines the heart to all moral virtue.

If the ſublime and comfortable doctrine of immediate grace were generally preached, the churches would be better frequented, and infidelity rare *. The common people, unſpoiled by vain philoſophy, hunger and thirſt for the ſpiritual food which comes down from Heaven. Ought not their ſhepherds to feed them

* "We muſt carry this yet further than the bare "believing that theſe things (the *doctrines* of "Chriſtianity) are TRUE; ſuch a faith devils have. "We muſt *make our people* underſtand, that this "faith *purifies the heart*, and *works by love*; and it "only becomes a SAVING and *juſtifying* faith, "when, upon our entering upon the practice of "thoſe rules that this religion preſcribes, we FEEL "A REAL VIRTUE *derived into us*, that makes us "NEW CREATURES, and gives us ſuch a VITAL "PERCEPTION of the truth of the promiſes made "us in it, that we receive theſe, as earneſts of our "inheritance, and ſo taſte and ſee that God is gra-"cious to us. This makes us LIVING STONES in "the SPIRITUAL BUILDING."

Biſhop BURNET's *Charge*.

with ſuch as is *convenient for them*, and to lead them from broken ciſterns and barren lands, to the green paſture, and ſtreams of living water? Who ſhall judge what is moſt convenient for them? a few individuals, or the million, directed, in their choice, by the concurrent guidance of the church, the liturgy, and the ſcriptures? It has been juſtly ſuggeſted, by a wit of antiquity, that the GUESTS, and not the cooks, are to judge of the taſte and ſalubrity of the viands prepared for the table. Now the gueſts invited to the ſpiritual feaſt, appear, by their numerous attendance, to prefer the food which comes from above, the truly evangelical doctrine of grace. However unſkilfully diſpenſed, the places of worſhip, where it is, or appears to be, diſpenſed at all, are thronged with multitudes, while other places are almoſt deſerted. How are the churches crowded by young and *poor* perſons, at confirmations; the whole of which office is founded, moſt evidently, on the doctrine of grace, and the Holy Spirit's actual interpoſition.

The following is the biſhop's prayer, in the office of confirmation: "Almighty "and everlaſting God, who haſt vouch-"ſafed to *regenerate* theſe thy ſervants, "by water and the Holy Ghoſt, and haſt "given unto them forgiveneſs of all their "ſins; ſtrengthen them, we beſeech thee, "O Lord, with the Holy Ghoſt the "Comforter, and daily increaſe in them "thy manifold GIFTS OF GRACE, the "ſpirit of *wiſdom* and *underſtanding*; the "ſpirit of counſel and ghoſtly ſtrength; "the ſpirit of KNOWLEDGE and true god-"lineſs; and fill them, O Lord, with the "ſpirit of thy holy fear, now and for ever." The biſhop then laying his hand upon every one ſeverally, ſays, "Defend, O Lord, "this thy child, with thy heavenly grace, "that he may continue thine for ever; "and daily increaſe in thy Holy Spirit "more and more, until he come unto thy "everlaſting kingdom." He proceeds thus: "Almighty and everlaſting God, "who *makeſt* us both to *will* and *do* thoſe "things that be good and acceptable unto

" thy divine Majeſty, let thy Holy Spirit " ever be with them; and ſo lead them " in the KNOWLEDGE and obedience of " thy holy word, that in the end they " may obtain everlaſting life. Vouchſafe " to direct, ſanctify, and govern both our " hearts and bodies," &c.

Can any biſhop who reads theſe words, or any pariſh prieſt who ſends the young ones of his flock to hear them, *conſiſtently* deny the doctrine of divine energy, or immediate grace *?

Excluſively of this ſublime doctrine, the GOSPEL, conſidered merely as a book of morality, has not ſo great an advantage over the KORAN, as every Chriſtian muſt wiſh and believe it to poſſeſs. Mahomet requires, in the KORAN, " the belief of " one God, truſt in him, frequent prayer " and faſting, *almſgiving* even to STRANG- " ERS, keeping of covenants, juſtice in

* Biſhop Beveridge ſays, " A man may as ſoon " read the letter of the ſcripture without eyes, as " underſtand the myſteries of the goſpel without " GRACE."

" dealings,

" dealings, patience in adverſity; to ho-
" nour father and mother, and to maintain
" them if they are old and poor. He for-
" bids *uſury*, bearing falſe witneſs, pro-
" fane ſwearing, and the murdering of in-
" fants, which had formerly been com-
" mon in Arabia." The MAHOMETAN alſo allows JESUS to be a prophet ſent from God, and commiſſioned to be a great inſtructor, reformer, and SAVIOUR. I ſay, diveſt Chriſtianity of the GIFT which our LORD gave to men, after his aſcenſion, and the infidel will place Chriſt far below Socrates, Plato, Epictetus, Seneca, and rank him with Mahomet, or even in a lower claſs; ſince there are many who deem the Koran a very fine compoſition, far ſuperior to the narratives of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, and to the epiſtles of Paul, the chief of the apoſtles.

Diveſt Chriſtianity of the Spirit's energy, and you rob it of its appropriate, diſtinguiſhing, and excluſive excellence and glory. You place it among the *modes of ſuperſtition* which, at various times, have

been encouraged by ſtates, in order to facilitate the movements of the political engine, in almoſt every country on the face of the globe. You make it the invention of man; and, as the invention of man, it will often be deſpiſed, in compariſon with the philoſophy which prevailed in the elegant ſchools of Athens and Rome, and which clothed its fine morality in all the ſeducing embelliſhments of a poliſhed diction. The writings of Plato and Cicero will be preferred to thoſe of the evangeliſts and apoſtles, if the PEARL which enriches the plain compoſitions of the latter, above all that human ingenuity can contrive, be torn from its place. That PEARL is figuratively emblematic of the Holy Spirit's influence, the UNCTION from above.

The ray of divinity, the anointing of the Spirit, ſhed a heavenly effulgence on the page of the written goſpel, which all human lights but faintly emulate. Theſe are merely moons or ſatellites. Chriſtianity is the ſun of the ſyſtem. I AM THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD, ſays Chriſt himſelf. Let

us

us remember, that it is the inſpiration that makes the oracle; not the prieſt or the ſhrine. Take away the ſpring from the time-keeper, and though the wheels are curiouſly contrived, and the gold in which it is caſed, and the jewels with which it is adorned, may ſtill be valuable, yet it will no longer be eſteemed but as a coſtly toy, or looked at, by thoſe who want information, with confidence. Thus the goſpel will have no vital, converting effect, when conſidered only as an hiſtorical narrative, with moral precepts occaſionally interſperſed, but unaccompanied with the MINISTRATION OF THE HOLY SPIRIT *.

For

* The *ſucceſsful propagation* of the goſpel could not be effected by the cauſes aſſigned by Mr. Gibbon, but muſt have been effected by the Holy Ghoſt. Is it not reaſonable to believe that it may *now* be propagated and continued by the ſame means as at *firſt*—the powerful agency of Heaven? Let us hear a ſenſible writer on the ſubject.

" The ſole adequate cauſe of the ſucceſsful pro-
" pagation of the goſpel is, according to the ſcrip-
" tures, the HOLY GHOST. It will be well if his
" agency,

For political and intereſted purpoſes, it may be talked of in churches and univerſities;

" agency, in theſe polite and rational days, be " thought to deſerve a moment's attention. Yet it " is evident, that there muſt be ſome cauſe for this " wonderful phenomenon. I ſhall not diſguſt the " rational world, by ſuppoſing the agency of any " ſupernatural being in the affair, but that of the " great Author of Nature. Any Spirit inimical to " him could not, and any Spirit obedient to his au- " thority would not, produce a *character* of ſuch " GOODNESS, but under his authority, and by a " power derived from himſelf. Even *miracles* can- " not *change the heart*, whatever effect they may " have on the judgment; and the ruling provi- " dence of God, implying only an *external govern-* " *ment*, does not influence the will; as facts abun- " dantly teſtify. All that is *rational* and *human* " is totally unequal to the taſk; nay, perhaps the " moſt *ſenſible* of mankind, ſhould they *deign* to ho- " nour theſe ſheets with their inſpection, can ſcarce " bear the idea of a *real Chriſtian* with patience. " There is an ENERGY more than human which " produces this character; and it remains that this " muſt be the INFLUENCE OF THE HOLY " GHOST.

" The reader who will allow himſelf ſeriouſly to " weigh this ſubject, may ſee that *nothing ſhort of* " *this* could conſtitute ONE REAL CHRISTIAN, in

" this

verſities; it may be ſcholaſtically defended, and generally profeſſed, and yet totally

" this or any other age of the church. Let him " conſider, whether it is even poſſible for mere man " to *invent* ſuch doctrines; much leſs to propagate " them with any ſucceſs, in a world like this. A " number of men, poſſeſſed of a ſixth ſenſe, of " which we had not the leaſt idea, would find but " few brought over to their opinion that they were " poſſeſſed of ſuch a ſenſation. Their pretenſions " would be conſtrued into pride or folly; but thoſe " whom the MOST HIGH ſhould endow with the " *ſame ſenſation*, would eaſily believe. The appli- " cation is obvious.

" Thus we have a *ſimple and obvious proof* of the " truth of Chriſtianity (the *propagation* of it by " the influence of the Holy Ghoſt). I fear, indeed, " it will weigh but little with thoſe who love not the " *real* Goſpel. The generality will ſay, 'At this " rate, the majority of thoſe who call themſelves " Chriſtians, DO NOT EVEN KNOW THEIR OWN " RELIGION.' It is devoutly to be wiſhed that " this were not the caſe; that even MANY THAT " HAVE WRITTEN ABLY IN DEFENCE OF " CHRISTIANITY, HAD THEMSELVES KNOWN " ITS NATURE. Much of the advantage which " deiſm has gained had then been prevented: we " ſhould have had more of the EXPERIMENTAL " PROOF: and that ſcripture had been better " known,

totally misunderstood and misrepresented. It will have no influence * on the hearts of men:

" known, 'He that believeth in the Son of God, " hath the witness in himself.' (1 John, v. 10.) " Sceptical doubts will vanish before stubborn facts. " *Were the gospel itself understood, little time need be* " *spent on its* EVIDENCES. One sight of the sun is " sufficient to point out its glorious Author. In all " things else, EXPERIENCE is allowed to be the best " schoolmaster; in religion only it is called en- " thusiasm." MILNER.

* " Judas Iscariot knew Jesus Christ—all that " he did—just in the *same manner* (though much " *better*) as a mere HISTORICAL believer of the " Gospel; a mere learned theologist. All know- " ledge of Christ, but that which is by divine inspi- " ration, or the new birth, is but as poor and pro- " fitless as the knowledge of Judas Iscariot." LAW.

" The empty, letter-learned knowledge, which " the natural man can as easily have of the sacred " scriptures and religious matters, as of any other " books or human affairs, being taken for *divine* " *knowledge*, has spread such darkness and delusion " all over Christendom, as may be reckoned no " less than a general *apostasy* from the gospel state " of divine illumination." IBID.

" The best ability of the natural man can go no " farther than *talk*, and notions, and opinions about " scripture

men: no, not on the hearts of the very perſons who thus talk of it, profeſs it, defend it; nor of thoſe who read or liſten to the moſt elaborate apologies, defences, and demonſtrations *.

Chriſt

" ſcripture words and facts; on theſe, he may be " a great critic, an acute logician, a powerful ora- " tor, and *know every thing of the ſcripture*, EX- " CEPT THE SPIRIT AND THE TRUTH."

LAW.

* " He who goes about to ſpeak of the myſtery of " the Trinity, and does it by words and names of " man's invention, talking of eſſences and exiſt- " ences, hypoſtaſes and perſonalities, priority in " co-equalities and unity in pluralities, may amuſe " himſelf, and build a tabernacle in his head, and " TALK ſomething, he knows not what; but the " good man, that FEELS the POWER OF THE FA- " THER, and to whom the SON is become wiſdom, " ſanctification, and redemption, in whoſe heart the " LOVE of the SPIRIT OF GOD is ſhed abroad, " this man, though he underſtands nothing of what " is unintelligible, yet he alone truly underſtands " the Chriſtian doctrine of the TRINITY."

Bp. TAYLOR, *on* John, vii. 17.

Miſerable and diſgraceful have been the rancorous diſputes on the TRINITY; a ſubject, one would think, which, if worldly ſentiments did not interpoſe,

Chriſt muſt be formed in the ſoul, before the ſoul can recognize the truth and efficacy of Chriſtianity.

Nearly two thouſand years have elapſed ſince the written Goſpel was promulged; and it has appeared to ſtand in need of defences and apologies to this very hour. Nor have defences or apologies been deficient in number, or in ſagacity and erudition. Fabricius reckons up ſeveral hundred books in defence of the Chriſtian religion. Diligent as he was, he has omitted many; and ſince his time, there has been a very conſiderable addition to the number. Yet the cauſe is ſaid ſtill to labour; and appearances juſtify the aſſertion. Accordingly, we have lately ſeen

poſe, might be diſcuſſed with perfect compoſure of temper. The enemy has triumphed, while Chriſtians have been tearing each other in pieces on an opinion.

"But riſe; let us no more contend, nor blame
"Each other, blam'd enough elſewhere; but ſtrive,
"In offices of love, how we may lighten
"Each other's burden, in our ſhare of woe."

MILTON.

ingenious

ingenious theologiſts, and excellent writers, called forth, by the exigencies of the times, in our own country, almoſt two thouſand years after the origin of Chriſtianity, and after all the preceding labours of divines, to diſplay its *evidences*, as if it were the production of yeſterday. Such a diſplay is ſaid to be more neceſſary than ever; and Europe has produced many excellent works of the kind. Such books furniſh exerciſe for the ſchools. May they be efficacious, as they are learned and ingenious! May they carry conviction to the heart, produce a lively faith, and refute the gainſayers! If they ſhould fail, their failure muſt not be attributed to any defect of abilities in their authors, but to the omiſſion of the internal evidence of the Holy Spirit. They are, almoſt without exception, above the reach, and diſguſting to the taſte, of the multitude; and let it be duly remembered, that to mere human reaſon and human learning, the *infidel* is ever ready to oppoſe weapons from the ſame armoury. His heart muſt be pierced with the two-

edged

edged ſword of the Spirit, before he will ſurrender to Faith the citadel of his own reaſon *.

But

* The celebrated pamphlet, entitled, CHRISTIANITY NOT FOUNDED ON ARGUMENT, was certainly nothing more than a piece of irony. Nevertheleſs, many a truth is told in jeſt; and *ridentem dicere verum quid vetat?*

I allow that CHRISTIANITY IS NOT FOUNDED ON ARGUMENT; and I make the conceſſion willingly, becauſe I know that it has a better foundation. Chriſtianity is not built on the ſand; but, like the houſe of the wiſe, on the rock—even the rock of ages. I will quote the words of the ironical adverſary, and let them avail as much as they can.

" *No man can ſay that Jeſus is the Lord, but by the* " *Holy Ghoſt.* Here is pointed out to us that great " dictator and infallible guide we have been ſeeking " for, and, indeed, the only character we can poſſibly " think of, any way equal to ſuch a province. It could " be nothing leſs than *omniſcience* and *omnipreſence* itſelf; " nothing but this inexhauſtible fountain of all truth, " that could be ſufficient to ſuch a demand; and he " it is, the *promiſed* oracle, who is to attend the " charge of believers to the end of the world; to " keep alive his *divine light* conſtantly in their " hearts; not to teach them rudiments of logic, " but to irradiate their ſouls at once with a thorough " conviction; and perform more by one ſecret " whiſper,

But however the works now alluded to may ſucceed in carrying conviction to the hearts

" whiſper, than a thouſand clamorous harangues " from the ſchools. From the ſatisfaction conſe- " quent to the mind from his performance of this " great office, it is, that he is ſo eminently ſtyled " the COMFORTER; as his operations are in an- " other place very ſtrongly and ſignificantly termed " the POWER OF GOD UNTO SALVATION. HE " THAT BELIEVETH IN THE SON OF GOD, " HATH THE WITNESS IN HIMSELF. In this " ſenſe it is, that we are properly ſtyled the TEM- " PLES OF THE HOLY GHOST; the conſecrated " ſcenes of his conſtant reſidence, there ever per- " ſonally preſent, and diſpenſing his certain intelli- " gences to the ſoul, which the Apoſtle calls the " WITNESSING OF THE SPIRIT WITH OUR " SPIRIT."

" It were endleſs to recount all the innumerable " paſſages, throughout the whole ſcripture, that " concur in aſcertaining the ſame *ſupernatural* and " all-ſufficient ſource and origin of our faith, in op- " poſition to all the feeble aids and uncertain ad- " vices that reaſon might poſſibly contribute to the " purpoſe. For we may obſerve, that in mention- " ing the principle of faith, we are always informed, " both what it is, and what it is not. BY GRACE " YE ARE SAVED, THROUGH FAITH, AND " THAT NOT OF YOURSELVES; IT IS THE " GIFT

hearts of men, it is certain that different perſons, in different ranks of life, with various

" GIFT OF GOD. NO MAN CAN COME TO ME, " (ſays CHRIST,) EXCEPT IT BE GIVEN HIM " OF MY FATHER.

" The motive which induces me to receive the " myſterious truths of the Goſpel, is the peculiar " grant and munificence of Heaven, over and above " the common privileges of our nature. It ſeems, " by the particular negatives every where ſo induſ- " triouſly diſperſed through all the expreſſions that " treat of this ſubject, that it was apprehended that " there might poſſibly happen, amongſt the unwary, " ſome miſtake on the occaſion; and that there- " fore, as it was an article of ſo great concern to " have a juſt notion of, the greateſt imaginable care " was taken, by the moſt *preciſe* and *emphatical* terms " that could be deviſed, to guard againſt any ſuch " fatal conſequence.

" But the ſtrongeſt confirmation of all theſe poſi- " tive and repeated revelations on the point, the " plaineſt declaration and direction what KIND of " EVIDENCE Chriſtians were always to truſt to and " rely on, for the information and aſſurance of their " minds, we may find ſummed up, in brief, in their " Maſter's laſt inſtructions at parting. The Spirit of " Truth which proceedeth from THE FATHER, HE " SHALL TESTIFY OF ME. As we have both the " ſame perſon and commiſſion elſewhere again ſpe- " cified:

rious degrees of natural ſenſibility and intellectual improvement, will be ſtruck, reſpectively, with different arguments, and actuated by diverſe modes of perſuaſion. A learned defence or proof of Chriſtianity, which is extolled by ſome, ſhall appear to others dull, lifeleſs, and totally foreign to the purpoſe. What is ſlighted by the few, may convince the many. On reading the book of the world, as a comment on the books of the library, and turning over the pages of experience, as a criterion of written wiſdom, I think I have obſerved that critical and hiſtorical *evidence*, in Chriſtian *theology*, however it may edify the ſcholar, has

" cified. THE SPIRIT, WHOM I SHALL SEND,
" SHALL LEAD YOU INTO ALL TRUTH.

" But, not to ſtand for ever tranſcribing particu-
" lars, I refer you once more to the GREAT ORI-
" GINAL, which will, I think, readily ſave us, both
" all farther trouble in quotations and comments,
" and abundantly evince, in oppoſition to all the
" evaſive conſtructions which may be impoſed on
" particular paſſages, that HE (the SPIRIT) was
" in general, to INSPIRE CONVICTION as well as
" *holineſs*; and to ILLUMINATE as well as SANC-
" TIFY our hearts."

little or no good effect on the multitude. By them it is ſeldom attended to at all; very imperfectly underſtood when attended to; and, when both attended to and underſtood, more frequently raiſes doubts and ſuſpicions, than produces *firm belief*, and that HOLY FRAME of mind which regulates the conduct of life, and ſupplies a heartfelt ſatisfaction. The poor, who are the major part of human beings, in all ages and countries, and to whom our Saviour particularly addreſſed his preaching, ſeldom know that books of critical theology exiſt, and would certainly never become Chriſtians, or have a juſt idea of what is meant by Chriſtianity, if they were not addreſſed in a manner more *authoritative*, and more divinely influential *.

Different

* " It is worth our obſerving, that when the apoſtle " calls upon his brethren not to be carried about with " ſtrange doctrines, he offers this as a preſervative: " *It is a good thing that the heart be* ESTABLISHED " *with* GRACE. Heb. xiii. 9. This will guard us " from errors, and this will directly lead us to truth; " for by the effectual influence of God's grace and " good

Different methods of recommending Chriſtianity, when they all tend to the ſame

" good Spirit on our minds, we ſhall find in ourſelves " a *peculiar eviction*, which will prevail more than all " demonſtrations; will be more apodictical than all " arguments and reaſonings. I may call this a di- " vine kind of logic, which thoroughly confutes and " convinces us, which anſwers all our ſcruples and " cavils, and wholly captivates our underſtandings; " inſomuch, that we are fully perſuaded of the truth " and reality of what is delivered to us.

" This, which I am now ſpeaking of, is the very " *depth of* CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY. You are " brought, by what I here propound unto you, into " the moſt INWARD RECESSES OF DIVINITY. " If you come to the true underſtanding of this, " you are arrived at the *greateſt proficiency in the* " *Chriſtian religion*. It cannot be ſo well deſcribed " as it can be experienced. The attainment of this " excellency, and the diſcovery, go together. There " is no better way to apprehend it than to poſſeſs it. " Religion is better felt and reliſhed by practice, " than it can be comprehended in the way of ſpecu- " lation; as the ſweetneſs of honey is better known " by the taſte, than by the deſcription of it.

" The real and experienced Chriſtian differs from " the ſpeculative one, as the *merchant* does from the " *chemiſt*. The former hath no ſkill in furnaces, and " cannot *talk* of the nature of gold, or the ordering

ſame beneficial end, ought to be adopted and encouraged, becauſe they are likelier to be *generally* ſucceſsful. One and the ſame method might convince only one deſcription of perſons among the infinite variety of which the maſs of mankind is compoſed. So long as Chriſtian faith, Chriſtian practice, and human happineſs are more and more promoted, whoſoever are the men, and whatever the books that promote them, let the benevolent man rejoice. Abſtruſe ſcholars, mathematicians, metaphyſicians, and logicians, have often little reliſh for Chriſtianity, till it is formed into a ſyſtem, methodical, ſubtle, and eru-

" of it, according to art, yet he is rich, and hath " gold enough. The latter hath rare notions of gold, " and can diſcourſe with great ſkill and quaintneſs " about the managing of it; but yet the man is " poor, and *wants what he talks of.* In like man- " ner a true practical Chriſtian may be rich in grace, " though he cannot learnedly diſcourſe of it; and a " ſpeculative Chriſtian may be truly poor, though he " can talk of the ſpiritual riches.—Ariſtotle wrote " of the world, but his ſcholar conquered it."

Dr. JOHN EDWARDS.

dite.

dite. Their religion muſt too often be ſuch, and ſuch only, as furniſhes matter for ingenious diſquiſition. They are apt, in the pride of ſcientific improvement, to deſpiſe the ſimplicity of the Goſpel. A religion, however, merely INTELLECTUAL, if there be any which may be ſo denominated, is eſſentially different from, and inferior to, what I have in this book inculcated, under the name of *cordial religion*. The one qualifies for degrees in an univerſity ſchool; the other is calculated to influence the *conduct* of all men, in the walks of common life; in the court, in the city, in the camp, and the market-place. High, low, rich, and poor, learned and unlearned, meet together in the ſchool of Chriſt, and are there equally favoured with grace, and inſtructed in the knowledge which leadeth to ſalvation. Ill would it fare with mankind, if they muſt be linguiſts and hiſtorians, before they can be duly informed of the nature of that religion, which was intended for the happineſs of all; and on

the neglect and ignorance of which, they are obnoxious to divine diſpleaſure.

Syſtematical or intellectual religion may employ the pen of a ready writer, or the tongue of a voluble diſputant in the academical or eccleſiaſtical chair; but cordial religion, effectually, though ſilently; certainly, though unoſtentatiouſly; ſweetens, ſoftens, and ſpiritualizes, the human diſpoſition. It may not gratify the pride or ſerve the worldly intereſt of individuals, but it elevates and refines the general nature of MAN.

How is this religion to be learned*? Not from ſyſtems, not from critics or metaphyſicians,

* Not by the letter, but by the Spirit, was MARY MAGDALEN learned. And how are your family, your mother and ſiſter, your ſervants, your poor neighbour, made Chriſtians—by Dr. *Clarke?* by academical profeſſors? or by the goſpel accompanied with *immediate* grace?

"But whom ſay ye that I am? Simon Peter anſwered and ſaid, Thou art Chriſt, the Son of the living God. And Jeſus anſwered and ſaid unto him, Bleſſed art thou, Simon Bar Jona; MY FATHER

ſicians, not from heathen hiſtorians and moraliſts, but by the TEACHING of GOD, or the divine energy of goſpel grace. Such is the principle of what I have ventured to term Chriſtian Philoſophy *, in contradiſtinction to the philoſophy of heatheniſm, and modern

" FATHER WHICH IS IN HEAVEN HATH RE-
" VEALED IT UNTO THEE.
MATT. xvi. 15. &c.

Our Saviour does not ſay that Peter had done well to form that concluſion, from *reaſoning* on what he ſaw and heard; or deriving the conviction from any human means; but he ſays, " FLESH AND " BLOOD hath not revealed it unto thee, but my " Father which is in Heaven."

* That *experience* is the beſt guide to Chriſtian knowledge, is Dr South's opinion:

" The truths of Chriſt crucified are the CHRIS-
" TIAN'S PHILOSOPHY; and a good life is the
" Chriſtian's *logic*; that great inſtrumental, intro-
" ductive art, that muſt guide the mind into the
" former; and where a long courſe of piety, and
" *cloſe communion with God*, has purged the heart,
" and rectified the will, and made all things ready
" for the reception of God's Spirit, *knowledge* will
" break in upon ſuch a ſoul, like the ſun ſhining in
" his full might, with ſuch a victorious ray, that no-
" thing ſhall be able to reſiſt it.

dern infidelity. It is CLEAR, amidſt ſome *obſcurity* *, from the whole tenor of the goſpel and

" It is *experience* that muſt give knowledge in the " Chriſtian profeſſion, as well as all others; and the " knowledge drawn from experience is quite of an- " other kind from that which flows from ſpeculation " and diſcourſe. It is not the *opinion*, but the *path* " of the juſt, that, the wiſeſt of men tell us, ſhines " more and more *unto a perfect day*. The obedient, " and the men of *practice*, are thoſe *ſons of light*, " that ſtill outgrow all their doubts and ignorances; " that ſtill *ride upon theſe clouds*, and triumph over " their preſent imperfections; till perſuaſion paſs " into knowledge, and knowledge advance into aſ- " ſurance; and all come, at length, to be com- " pleted in the *beatific viſion*, and a full fruition of " thoſe joys, which God has in reſerve for them " whom, by his grace, he ſhall prepare for glory."

Dr. SOUTH.

Dr. South, a man of wit and moſt vigorous intellect, was particularly active in decrying the doctrine of immediate grace, becauſe the COURT diſcountenanced thoſe who maintained it: and therefore what he has here ſaid muſt be allowed to be extorted from him, by the *force of truth* oppoſing royal influence and *political* religion, which *varies* as the wind blows.

* " The obſcurity and *difficulty* of the ſcriptures " ſerves," ſays Biſhop Wilſon, " to ſubdue the pride " of man; to convince us, that to underſtand them,

" we

and epiſtles, that ſince our Lord's aſcenſion, the beneficial purpoſes of Chriſtianity are accompliſhed by the continual agency and never-failing ſuperintendance of the Holy Spirit. I would by no means proceed ſo far as a writer ſome hundred years ago, who, obſerving the great and conſtant power attributed, by the written goſpel, to the Holy Ghoſt, publiſhed a book, which he entitled, EVANGELIUM SPIRITUS SANCTI, or, *the Goſpel of the Holy Ghoſt*; but at the ſame time, it appears to me evident, from the declarations of Jeſus Chriſt, that the goſpel is now chiefly *efficacious*, as it has been ever ſince the aſcenſion, by the operation of the Holy Ghoſt; the wakeful, tutelary guardian of every human creature. He may be *reſiſted*; his holy fire may be *quenched*; his *temple* may be polluted; and he may, in conſequence, depart in diſpleaſure. Happy would it be, if appearances did not juſtify the apprehenſion, that he is actually reſiſt-

" we have need of a *light ſuperior* to reaſon, and " that we muſt apply to God for help."

ed, his holy fire quenched, his temple polluted, and both his diſpleaſure and departure little regarded. It is the ſcope of *Chriſtian Philoſophy* to prevent this dreadful calamity.

To enquire HOW * the Spirit operates, is fruitleſs, if not preſumptuous. It is enough for man to know, that it *does* operate; that, unleſs the words of ſcripture are violently tortured out of their meaning, out of that plain ſenſe which every reader of competent judgment and of integrity, unwarped by prejudice, muſt allow them to bear, the Spirit of God is at this moment effecting, in the boſoms of all who are duly prepared for its energy, the grand purpoſe of our Saviour's incarnation. Great indeed is the myſtery: but equally myſterious are the proceſſes of nature †. All around us is myſtery. Our very exiſtence, our nutrition, the motion

* "*Vocula* illa *quomodo*," Luther uſed to ſay, "*eſt* "*deteſtabilis*."

† "Is the doctrine of grace more ſtupendous than "the velocity of motion given to light?"

Bp. WARBURTON.

of a muſcle in our bodies, is a wonderful arcanum, too difficult to be accounted for by reaſon. Yet, I believe, I know, that *I live, and move, and have my being*, though I cannot explain the union of ſoul and body, the mode of alimentary ſupply, or the cauſe of muſcular motion. So alſo the ſpiritual life and motion are inexplicable. But this is certain: he who believes the ſcriptures, muſt believe its reality. And he who is once truly and *experimentally* * convinced

* " Η της ΠΕΙΡΑΣ *ακριβεια κατισχυει την των λογων* " *πιθανοτητα.*" DIOD. SIC. *Hiſt. lib.* I.

PRAYER is the *means* of producing this EXPERIENCE in religion.

" If mankind are corrupted and depraved in their " moral character, and ſo are unfit for that ſtate " which Chriſt is gone to prepare for his diſciples; " and if the aſſiſtance of GOD'S SPIRIT be neceſ- " ſary to *renew their nature*, in the degree requiſite " to their being qualified for that ſtate, all which is " implied in the expreſs, though figurative decla- " ration, 'Except a man be BORN of the Spirit, " he cannot enter into the kingdom of God:' ſup- " poſing this, is it poſſible any *ſerious perſon* can " think it a ſlight matter, whether or no he makes " *uſe of the means*, expreſsly commanded by God, " for obtaining this DIVINE ASSISTANCE; eſpe-

convinced of the Spirit's operation, will want no other EVIDENCE; and he who taſtes the fruits of the Spirit, will deſire no other diſplay of the EXCELLENCE of Chriſtianity. Thus will the purpoſe of my book be accompliſhed. The EVIDENCE and EXCELLENCE of Chriſtianity will be FELT * and acknowledged by every

" cially ſince the whole analogy of nature ſhews that " we are not to expect any benefits, without making " uſe of the appointed means for obtaining or en- " joying them? Now REASON ſhews us nothing of " the particular immediate means of obtaining ſpi- " ritual benefits. This, therefore, we muſt learn " from REVELATION."—And Revelation ſays, *Aſk, and it ſhall be given.* BUTLER's Anal. Part 2. c. 1.

* " We not only believe it, but we FEEL it too; " we feel the comfortable influences, the ſacred " emanations of the Holy Spirit upon us; more *par-* " *ticularly* at thoſe offices of DEVOTION, wherein HE " deſcends upon *us* alſo, as he did once upon our " bleſſed Saviour, like a dove, and ſheds his grace " upon us, in ſome meaſure, with thoſe excellencies " which become the ſons of God.

" Or rather, he deſcends upon us, as he did once " before, upon the face of the waters, when he " brought beauty and order upon that which before " was nothing but deformity and confuſion."

Bp. HICKMAN.

man,

man, who becomes a convert to the doctrine of grace. He will acquire a SPIRITUAL UNDERSTANDING *; his rational faculty, as to ſpiritual matters, will be ſublimed and refined in ſuch a manner, as to ſuperſede the neceſſity of thoſe voluminous, far-fetched, and elaborate proofs and defences of Chriſtianity which have been enumerated, in a long catalogue, by *Fabricius*; and which, one after another, like abortive productions, have dropped into the gulph of oblivion, and left Chriſtianity juſt where they found it. Indeed, as defences of this kind have encreaſed, Chriſtians appear to have decreaſed. The cavils introduced for refutation have lived, and the refutations died and been forgotten.

But doctrines which cannot be refuted by ſcripture, are ſometimes exploded by the illiberal means of ſtigmatizing them

* Col. i. 9. "We pray for you that ye may be "filled with the knowledge of his will, in all wiſdom "and *ſpiritual underſtanding*."—Again, "Conſider "what I ſay, and the *Lord give thee* UNDER-"STANDING in all things." 2 TIM. ii. 7.

with an offenſive or unpopular NAME. This practice has always been highly detrimental to the diffuſion of genuine Chriſtianity. It cauſes opinions to be condemned in the groſs. It induces the mind of the careleſs, contemptuouſly to reject the maſs, without ſelecting the wheat from the chaff, and, indeed, without the trouble of examination. There is a viciſſitude or faſhion in religious doctrines, as well as in the modes of dreſs and external behaviour. Such a book, ſays the leader of the day, is Arminian, or calviniſtical, or METHODISTICAL*, and it muſt be cried down by every

* BISHOP HURD is as far removed from a *methodiſt* as poſſible. He is a divine, a philoſopher, a ſcholar of the firſt rank; yet hear him (and let his words have weight) on the evidence of the Spirit of God on the heart of man.

" To the SPIRIT, *enlightening* our underſtand-
" ings, *purifying* our wills, and *confirming* our faith,
" we muſt impute ALL that is good in us, ALL that
" proficiency in TRUE holineſs, which qualifies us
" for the enjoyment of Heaven; and through
" this diſcipline it is, that they *who ſow to the*
" *Spirit*,

every pamphleteer or controverſialiſt, who is aſpiring at favour and preferment. But away

" *Spirit*, are, in the end, *enabled of the Spirit to reap* " LIFE EVERLASTING."

" All the revelations of God's will, even to our " Lord himſelf as the *man Chriſt Jeſus*, and all the " ſecret *illuminations* of the faithful, in *all* times, are " to be regarded as ſo many emanations from the Spirit " of God, the ENLIGHTENER: all the gradual im- " provements of our virtue, all the graces which firſt " deſcend upon our hearts, and then manifeſt them- " ſelves in every good word and work, are the pro- " duction of the ſame Spirit, in his office of SANC- " TIFIER: and laſtly, all the firmneſs and reſolu- " tion we poſſeſs, under every trial in the world, all " the foretaſte we have of future favour and accept- " ance, all our JOY and PEACE in BELIEVING, " are the ſigns and proofs of the COMFORTER " ſpeaking to us, and, according to our Saviour's " PROMISE, ABIDING IN US."

" If *a ray of light break in upon us*; if a new de- " gree of *knowledge* be imparted to us; if we ſee the " TRUTH OF THE GOSPEL more clearly, in any " reſpect, than before we had done; WE CANNOT " MISTAKE in aſcribing this additional *information*, " or CONVICTION, to the ILLUMINATING " SPIRIT WITHIN US."

" If we perceive our DEVOTIONS to be quickened, " our hopes enlivened, our FAITH FORTIFIED,

" we

away with names, and the petty diſtinctions of religious party. Are you a Chriſtian, or wiſh to be one, in deed, not in word only; for the ſake of ſpiritual, not temporal purpoſes? Then drop your prejudices, and ſeek the SPIRIT OF CHRISTIANITY; not in ſyſtems, but in the written goſpel, aſſiſted by prayer, and the pious illuſtrations of ſincere, good men, however they

" we *ſhall not miſtake* (having the expreſs promiſe of " our Lord and Maſter) in aſcribing theſe conſola- " tions of peace and joy to the COMFORTER; we " may regard them as the EARNEST AND PLEDGE " OF THE SPIRIT IN OUR HEARTS. (Eph. i. 14.)

" I know," continues he, " that this will appear " ſtrange to natural reaſon. But ſo the ſcripture has " prepared us to expect they would do. For the " natural man (ſays the Apoſtle) receiveth not the " things of the Spirit of God; for they are fooliſh- " neſs unto him. (1 Cor. ii. 14.) And to the ſame " purpoſe, our MASTER himſelf, ſpeaking of the " SPIRIT OF TRUTH;—" whom (ſays he) the " WORLD cannot receive, becauſe it ſeeth him not, " neither knoweth him; but ye, (addreſſing himſelf " to his diſciples, that is, to men who walk by faith, " and not by ſight,) ye know him; for he dwelleth " in you, and ſhall be in you."

Bp. HURD, Serm. 18. vol. ii.

may

may have been reviled or neglected, through prejudice, political artifice, or miſtaken zeal. When you have thus found the truth, ſhew its influence by your charity. Be united to all Chriſtians, as well as to Chriſt; and beware of making diſtinctions, by nicknames, and thus exciting envy, wrath, malice, which are of a nature oppoſite to the fruits of the Spirit, love, joy, and peace. Good men ſhould join in a firm phalanx, that the evil may not triumph on their diviſions. Let all who are united under the banners of Chriſt, hail one another as brother Chriſtians, though they may differ on the ſubject of church diſcipline, rites, ceremonies, or even non-eſſential doctrine *.

" If

* " Setting aſide many circumſtances, in which " men may *ſafely* err, there are but few truths of " ſcripture of an eſſential nature; or, to ſpeak more " properly, there is but ONE, concerning which all " believers (I mean thoſe who deſerve the name) " are firmly agreed. This truth is the teſtimony of " the word of God concerning Jeſus Chriſt, that he " came into the world to ſave ſinners fully, freely,

" and

" If there be any *conſolation* in Chriſt,
" if any comfort in love, if any *fellowſhip*
" *of*

" and eternally. So little room then, in reality,
" does the ſcripture give for the diverſity of opinions,
" that it calls for perfect unity of ſentiment; the di-
" verſity itſelf being owing to the corruption and
" blindneſs of human nature in the worſt, as well as
" the remains of that corruption and blindneſs in the
" beſt. The evidence of this truth, whence ariſes
" ſo full an agreement among believers, and ſuch
" complete ſatisfaction in their own minds, is far
" greater than what can ariſe from any argumentation,
" in which mankind are apt to deceive both them-
" ſelves and others. It is the evidence of INTER-
" NAL EXPERIENCE. I feel myſelf loſt and mi-
" ſerable. I experience ſuch an healthful change in
" my whole moral ſyſtem: ſo that, upon the whole,
" Chriſtianity is the true cure of ſcepticiſm; and to
" the ſeriouſly diſpoſed, who ſubmit to the *teaching*
" *of the Spirit*, it GIVES THE HIGHEST INTER-
" NAL EVIDENCE OF ITS OWN TRUTH. A
" man finds himſelf naturally averſe to all good,
" ignorant of God, and without either love or gra-
" titude towards him, *ſelfiſh* and *hard-hearted* with
" reſpect to his fellow-creatures. By putting his
" truſt in Chriſt, he has attained peace of conſcience,
" love, and new views of the glory of God. He
" has experienced a real change in his affections and
" tempers. Surely he muſt be allowed to be a com-
" petent

" *of the Spirit*, if any bowels and mercies, " fulfil ye my joy, that ye be like- " minded, having the ſame love, being " of one accord, and of one mind *."

Let us conſider how the hard-hearted, unconverted, depraved, and worthleſs part

" petent judge of what he has felt; he may preach " too, by his life, the truth and the power of the " goſpel to others; and as he will find his *evidences* " increaſe more and more, he may be more and more " happy, from the conſciouſneſs of God within him " now, (Col. i. 27. 2 Cor. xiii. 5.) and the proſ- " pect of bliſs hereafter.

" If it be aſked, where are ſuch perſons to be " found? it is confeſſed their number is but rare. " We may thank, for this, the CONTEMPT OF THE " OPERATIONS OF THE HOLY GHOST, which " prevails in our days. A ſerious deſire of knowing " the real truth, and a ſpirit of ſubmiſſion to this di- " vine teaching, are things which the truth requires " of all who ſeek it: if you refuſe this, you unrea- " ſonably refuſe to Chriſtianity her own mode and " order of things; you ſtrip her of her arms, and " then complain of her feebleneſs and impotency. " But if you ſubmit to be the ſcholar of Jeſus in- " deed, you will find, by experience, whether he " will not give you *to know* the truth, and whether " the truth will not make you free." MILNER.

* Phil. ii. 1, 2.

of

of mankind exult, while Chriſtians, agreeing in eſſentials, quarrel and revile each other, not on the ſubſtance of religion, but on the mere ſhades of difference in opinion in matters of indifference. Let not the Philiſtians triumph. Let the olive-bearing army of peace-makers be combined under the banners of benevolence. *Theirs* is an unbloody cruſade; *theirs* is the conteſt of love. The victories in *their* warfare are over ſin, miſery, and death; and their crown, immortality. Let them march on to the ſoft harmony of Hoſannas and Hallelujahs, uninterrupted by the diſcordant din of angry contention. Are you a ſincere believer? a lover of God and man? I ſalute you from my heart as my brother in Chriſt, whether, in conſequence of your birth and education, you formed the creed you utter, at Rome, at Geneva, or in your cloſet at home. The Holy Ghoſt is the centre of our union; and all who are joined to him, muſt be aſſociated in love.

Under

Under the illuſtrious champions of Chriſtianity, who flouriſhed, in England, during the laſt century, great were the triumphs of grace over human obduracy. *The word of God* WAS *mighty, and caſt down imaginations* *. The ſword of the Spirit, a *figurative* ſword, the only one approved by Chriſtianity, wielded by men who, like theſe, fought the good fight of faith, has been irreſiſtible. But many, ſince their time, have let it ruſt in its ſcabbard, and uſed, as a ſubſtitute for it, the wooden batoon of heathen ethics and modern philoſophy, in a kind of mock fight, beating the air, to the amuſement of the indifferent or unbelieving ſpectator. The men of the world, who laugh at religion, and the pretended philoſophers who reaſon againſt it, obſerving that the ſword of the Spirit was no longer uſed, came forth with the renewed and increaſed audacity of thoſe who love to diſplay their proweſs, when there is but

* 2 Cor. ix. v. διαλογισμους, which we render *imaginations*, certainly ſignifies REASONINGS.

a feeble

a feeble oppoſition. They ſang the ſong of victory, and ventured to ſuggeſt that Chriſtianity, conſcious of the badneſs of her cauſe, had ſurrendered in fact, though ſhe ſtill kept up the *appearance of defence*, for the ſake of decency, LUCRE, and *political* deception. Infidelity plumed herſelf on her fancied conqueſt, and has long been endeavouring to ſway her ſceptre over the moſt poliſhed countries of Chriſtendom. In France, at laſt, ſhe flatters herſelf ſhe has gained a complete victory, and ſilenced her opponent for ever.

Let us mark and deplore the conſequence to morals and ſociety. Extreme ſelfiſhneſs, pride, vanity, envy, malice, hardneſs of heart, fraud, cunning, and the falſe varniſh of external decorum, hiding internal deformity, have remarkably prevailed in recent times, in the moſt poliſhed regions, rendering man, as an individual, wretched and contemptible, and ſociety comfortleſs and inſecure. The human race has degenerated, in proportion

as

as faith has diminiſhed. The true ſpirit of Chriſtianity, which can alone dignify human nature, and ſoften and liberalize the obdurate, contracted, ſelfiſh boſom of the mere natural, *animal* †, man, has not been ſufficiently diffuſed, ſince it has been faſhionable to extol natural religion, by depreciating grace; and the reſult has been, a deplorable profligacy both in principle and practice.

How devoutly then is it to be wiſhed, that this true ſpirit may revive; that the divine influence of the GENUINE GOSPEL *

* I hope the preſent time is not that of which the Apoſtle ſpeaks:

"The time will come, when they will not endure "ſound doctrine." 2 TIM. iv. 3.

Men who preach againſt divine grace, may be ſaid to be thoſe whom Chriſt addreſſes in theſe words:

"Ye ſhut up the kingdom of Heaven againſt "men; for ye neither go in yourſelves, neither "ſuffer ye them that are entering to go in."

MATT. xxiii. 13.

But while God's eternal truth is its foundation, and God's Holy Spirit its *guard*, neither violence nor treachery can ſubvert the kingdom of Heaven.

† Ψυχικος.

may

may again prevail, and melt the heart of ſteel, and bow the ſtubborn knees of the men of the world, and the wiſe men whom the world admires? Behold them purſuing their own petty, ſelfiſh, ſordid purpoſes, regardleſs of all others, but as they ſerve their own intereſt or pleaſure; neither loving God nor man, and depraved to a nature almoſt diabolical, by habits of faſhionable voluptuouſneſs, ſelfiſhneſs, and CRUELTY, authorized by the moſt illuſtrious examples in HIGH life. Behold this diabolical character transforming itſelf to an angel of light, by ſtudied embelliſhments and poliſhed manners, in which truth, honour, and benevolence are aſſumed as a cloak to cover the baſeſt treachery, the vileſt arts of diſſimulation. Behold this character recommended, with all the charms of language, by one of the firſt NOBLEMEN, wits, and writers of the times, as the mark of the moſt ſolid wiſdom; behold it, in conſequence of recommendation ſo powerful, ſpreading among the youth of the nation, and diffuſing

fuſing a poliſhed, ſplendid miſery, like the ſhining appearance which is ſeen on maſſes of corruption and putreſcence. "Ye are "the ſalt of the earth," ſays our Saviour; evidently meaning the ſalt that is to preſerve the world from a corrupt ſtate, by becoming the means of grace to thoſe who hear you preach and teach the true doctrine. How is he then the friend of man, or of his country, who obſtructs the prevalence of ſuch doctrine? Yet men, apparently good and learned, have united with the unprincipled, in placing every obſtacle in the way of its diffuſion among the people.

The grace of God is favourable to the tranquillity and ſecurity of the ſtate; to the community, as well as to individuals, by teaching virtue of the moſt beneficial kind under the ſtrongeſt ſanction. "The grace of God," ſays the Apoſtle, "teaches us to deny all ungodlineſs and "worldly luſts, and to live ſoberly, "*righteouſly*, and godly in the WORLD." Yet againſt the prevalence of this grace of God, many pens and tongues have been employed during the laſt fourſcore years;

the pens and tongues, not of profligate infidels only, but of divines, teaching, for Chriſtianity, a moral ſyſtem of philoſophy, well known* long before the

* Yet the heathens themſelves, mere moraliſts as they are often conſidered, had an idea of the *divine energy*. Remarkable are the words of Maximus Tyrius.

"Do you wonder that God was preſent with Socrates, friendly, and prophetic of futurity—AN INMATE OF HIS MIND?—A man, he was, pure in his body, good in his ſoul, exact in the conduct of his life, maſterly in thinking, eloquent in ſpeaking, pious towards God, and holy towards men."

The doctrine of divine aſſiſtance, or of the immediate operation of the heavenly Spirit on the mind of man, is ſo far from unreaſonable, that it was maintained by ſome of the greateſt maſters of reaſon, before the appearance of Chriſtianity.

The heathens did not affirm that the knowledge they poſſeſſed of theology was derived to them from reaſon; for Plato expreſsly ſays it is Θεων εις Ανθρωποις δοσις, the gift of the Gods to men,—the effect of divine communication. They deemed it *ſupernatural*, that reaſon ſhould diſcover the will of God; a gift above nature, (δωρεαν υπερ φυσιν νικωσαν την φυσιν,) and overcoming nature in its preſent ſtate of imbecility. The dead may as eaſily ariſe and walk, as the mind of man, fallen, as it is, into a ſtate of ſpiritual death, raiſe

the nativity of Chriſt; and thus rendering, as far as their efforts could prevail, his goſpel raiſe itſelf to God and a divine life. Nothing can enable man to do thoſe things which are above his *natural powers*, but *ſupernatural* aid, and that muſt come from the influence of the Deity.

It is, however, worth while to mark the DISCORDANT and *inconſiſtent* opinions of celebrated heathens on the ſubject of divine aſſiſtance.

"*Bonus vir ſine Deo nemo eſt.*"

SENECA, Epiſt. 41.

"*Deus in humano corpore hoſpitans.*" Epiſt. 31.

Yet this ſame philoſopher ſays, in another place, "*Eſt aliquid quo ſapiens antecedat Deum. Ille naturæ* "*beneficio, non ſuo, ſapiens eſt.* In one reſpect a phi- "loſopher excels God. God is obliged to *nature* "for his wiſdom, and cannot help being ſo. The "philoſopher thanks himſelf only." *Epiſt.* 53.

"*Atque hoc quidem omnes mortales ſic habent,* exter- "nas commoditates, *vineta, ſegetes, oliveta, uberta-* "*tem frugum et fructuum, omnem denique commodi-* "*tatem, proſperitatemque vitæ, a Diis ſe habere; vir-* "*tutem autem nemo unquam acceptam Deo retulit. Ni-* "*mirùm rectè. Propter virtutem enim jure laudamur,* "*et in virtute recte gloriamur. Quod non contingeret,* "*ſi id* donum a Deo, *non a nobis haberemus. At vero* "*aut honoribus aucti, aut re familiari, aut ſi aliud* "*quippiam nacti ſumus fortuiti boni, depulimus mali,*

pel a ſuperfluous, and even ugly excreſcence upon it. There is a kind of wiſdom, we are told on the beſt authority, "which deſcendeth not from above, but is "EARTHLY, SENSUAL, DEVILISH *." No wonder that men, who are taught, by their inſtructors, to purſue this wiſdom, and, in effect, to reject the goſpel at the very moment they are ſolemnly profeſſing it, ſhould

"*cùm Diis gratias agimus, tùm nihil noſtræ laudi aſ-*
"*ſumptum arbitramur. Num quis, quod bonus vir*
"*eſſet, gratias Diis egit unquam? at quòd dives, quòd*
"*honoratus, quòd incolumis. Ad rem autem ut redeam,*
"*judicium hoc omnium mortalium eſt, fortunam a Deo*
"*petendam, a ſeipſo ſumendam eſſe ſapientiam.*"

CICERO, *de Nat. Deor. lib.* 3. *c.* 36.

"*Multos et noſtra civitas et Græcia tulit ſingulares*
"*viros quorum neminem,* NISI JUVANTE DEO, *talem*
"*fuiſſe credendum eſt.*" CIC. de Nat. Deor. *lib.* 2.

"*Nemo igitur vir magnus ſine aliquo affiatu divino*
"*uſquam fuit.*" CIC.

"*Hic eſt quiſquam gentis ullius qui ducem naturam*
"*nactus ad virtutem pervenire poteſt.*" CIC. Leg.

Both Cicero's and Seneca's ſentiments on this ſubject are contradictory.

"Δεοῖλαι ξυναγωνιστου θεου καὶ ξυλληπτορος."

MAX. Tyr. *Diſſ.* 22.

* James, iii. 15.

become

become (like the wiſdom which they cultivate, and which the Apoſtle ſo ſtrongly reprobates) earthly, ſenſual, DEVILISH. Much of the profligacy of manners in the preſent century is to be attributed to the deſertion of the religion of our forefathers, and the teaching of a Chriſtianity which has not the SAVOUR OF LIFE, and was unknown in England at the reformation.

" Earthly, ſenſual, *deviliſh*," are the epithets which the Apoſtle uſes: now let us turn from the written book to the living world. Can any impartial obſerver deny, without affected candour, that there are many, whoſe conduct deſerves theſe epithets? and can he deny, that they are chiefly among perſons who ſeem to live without God in the world, and to be unbelievers in Revelation, though perhaps conformiſts to the church? Such perſons ſeem to delight in evil; and, like the being from whom the laſt of theſe *epithets* is taken, to go about, ſeeking whom they

may devour *. No man can be much converſant in any buſineſs in the world, eſpecially where there is competition, without meeting with men who heſitate at no falſehood or baſeneſs, and with whom it is never ſafe to have either converſation or tranſaction. Plauſibly pretending to courteouſneſs, to friendſhip, to every thing juſt, right, and amiable, they lie in wait to deceive and to injure. They will do wanton miſchief, for its own ſake. They will not only demoliſh the fair fabric of another's happineſs, but laugh over the ruins which they have made.

* Read, in the following deſcription from ſcripture, how men ONCE degenerated, when eſtranged from God.

"So that there reigned in all men, without exception, blood, manſlaughter, theft, and diſſimulation; corruption, unfaithfulneſs, tumults, perjury, diſquieting of good men, forgetfulneſs of good turns, defiling of ſouls, changing of kind, diſorder in marriages, adultery, and ſhameleſs uncleanneſs." WISDOM, c. xiv. 23—29.

How

How beneficial would it be for ſuch perſons, and for ſociety, if their hearts were renewed by regenerating grace; if they could be perſuaded to believe that there really is ſomething more deſirable than MAMMON; ſomething that contributes more to happineſs, and the pleaſurable enjoyment of life, than ſhew, equipage, *living in the eyes of others*, and the indulgence of an unfeeling, *ſelf-idolizing* vanity, at the expence of truth, juſtice, mercy, and every thing that gives ſolid ſatisfaction and real dignity. The grace of God would even ADORN them, make them more eſtimable and honourable, than the longeſt ſeries of unmeaning titles, the moſt brilliant gems in a coronet, the moſt magnificent houſes and parks, and moſt gaily-painted vehicles. It would do more; it would liberalize and ſoften their hearts, and make them MEN, ſuch as the Creator intended them to be, feelingly alive to the charms of goodneſs, and to the touch of ſympathy. The film would be removed from their eyes; and while

they conſulted the peace and happineſs of others, they would ſee the things *that belong unto their own.* The horizon of their mental viſion, now all ſombrous and cloudy, would be beautifully ſerene. The ſtream of their lives, now a deſolating torrent, abruptly daſhing and foaming over its banks, would flow in its proper channel, ſmooth and clear, bleſt and bleſſing in its courſe.

Surely every thinking and good-natured mortal, who obſerves what a deſpicable and deteſtable, or rather pitiable object, a man may become, however elevated his rank and affluent his fortune, when his heart is hardened, and he feels no ſentiment of love to God, or kindneſs to his fellow-creatures, muſt wiſh to promote, and gladly co-operate with others in promoting, the prevalence of the true Spirit of Chriſtianity *. This alone, operating by

* The true Spirit of Chriſtianity can alone preſerve the CHURCH and *ſincere* religion in ſociety.

"I muſt profeſs, that I believe the DEGENE-
"RACY from the truth and power of the Chriſtian
"religion,

by grace, can reſtore the depraved, fallen, wretched creature, become, by his perverſeneſs,

" religion, the ignorance of the principal doctrines " of the Goſpel, and that ſcorn which is caſt in theſe, " and the like expreſſions, on the grace of our Lord " Jeſus Chriſt, by ſuch as not only profeſs themſelves to be miniſters, but of a higher degree than " ordinary, will be ſadly ominous to the whole " ſtate of the reformed church amongſt us, if not " timely repreſſed and corrected." Dr. OWEN.

The ſcriptures themſelves attribute the corruption of religion, and even the total loſs of DIVINE KNOWLEDGE, to the *reaſonings* of men upon it: when they regard the *outward*, and neglect or deſpiſe the inward teſtimony.

There is no truth more clearly aſſerted in ſcripture, than that the things of God are not known but by the SPIRIT OF GOD.

" The natural man receiveth not the things of the " Spirit of God; for they are fooliſhneſs unto him; " neither can he know them, becauſe they are SPIRITUALLY diſcerned." 1 COR. ii. 14.

" *He that lacketh theſe things,*" (the *graces* mentioned in a preceding verſe, particularly the *partaking of the divine nature,*) " *is* BLIND, *and cannot* " *ſee afar off.*" 2 PET. i. 9.

Men wanting theſe graces, and this participation of the divine nature, we are expreſsly told, *grew vain in their imaginations*; profeſſing themſelves

verſeneſs, *earthly*, *ſenſual*, *deviliſh*, to his proper rank, as a rational, immortal being,

wiſe, they became *fools*; worſhipping the *creature* (and among the created things is to be numbered the faculty of reaſoning) *more than the Creator*. They ſpoiled the religion of Chriſt, through philoſophy and vain deceit, after the *traditions of men*, and turned *the truth of God into a lie*. This was in conſequence of following the *rudiments* of the *world*, κατα τα στοιχεια, according to the elements and principles of natural reaſon and philoſophy. Wherefore the Apoſtle would have them dead to the *rudiments* of the world, for they are only the *commandments and doctrines of* MEN, vainly puffed up by their FLESHLY *mind*, and *ſcience falſely ſo called*, conſiſting of fooliſh and unlearned *queſtions*, which ſerved only to GENDER STRIFE. (2 Tim. ii. 23.)

The Apoſtle gives Timothy a deſcription of human learning unaccompanied with divine grace; and ſays that "it is proud, knowing nothing, but doting "about queſtions and ſtrifes of words, whereof "cometh envy, ſtrife, railings, evil ſurmiſings, "perverſe diſputings of men of *corrupt minds*, and "deſtitute of the truth." (1 Tim. vi. 4. 2 Tim. ii. 14.) He therefore bids him put them in remembrance, charging them, before the Lord, not to ſtrive with words to no profit, but to the perverting of the hearer; for they will *increaſe into more ungodlineſs*,

being, and to the unſpeakable happineſs, for which he was intended by divine benevolence.

Mine is an humble attempt to promote the prevalence of the true Spirit of Chriſtianity. In recommending the doctrine

godlineſs, (they will cauſe infidels to grow more obſtinate and diſputatious in defence of their unbelief,) *and their words will eat as cankers*; (they will, by ſubmitting the claims of Chriſtianity to human reaſon only, eat up and deſtroy its very eſſence, which is divine.) Therefore he again diſſuades "*fooliſh and* "*unlearned queſtions*, knowing that they do gender "ſtrifes;" that inſtead of ſettling diſputes, and confirming men in the faith, they provoke controverſy, multiply doubts, and are ultimately a fruitful cauſe of infidelity. "If you are determined to rely "on reaſoning," ſaid the Tindals, Collins's, Morgans, Chubbs, and Paines, "we will accept your "challenge, and fight you with the weapons of your "own choice." They fought; and in the opinions of many *deluded* perſons, were often victorious.

It is a ſad inſtance of imprudence in the leaders of our Chriſtian warfare, when they give up the ſword of the Spirit, and rely entirely on the φρονημα σαρκος for protection and defence. The doctrine of grace furniſhes a panoply.

which this book particularly enforces, I know that I am juſtified by the holy ſcriptures*, by the church, by the tenets of the moſt learned and virtuous of the diſſenters, and the greateſt divines of this country, who have diſplayed their abilities either by the preſs or the pulpit. I claim no merit, but that of endeavouring to reſcue the true and moſt momentous doctrine of the Goſpel from the neglect and contempt in which it has been involved, during this century, by falſe policy and *partiality*, expreſſing their rancorous hatred to ſects, deemed, at various time, injurious to certain worldly intereſts, and temporary purpoſes of ſtate. Chriſtianity itſelf has been wounded by weapons, aimed only at men, whoſe political ſentiments might perhaps be wrong, though their religious were, for the moſt part, ſtrictly

* "He who doubts it, quarrels not with our creed, "but our grammar; and inſtead of going to church "to be inſtructed better, he ought to be ſent to "ſchool." Bp. HICKMAN.

conformable

conformable to ſcripture *, and beneficial to every community.

I confeſs myſelf, in this attempt, to be only the pupil of thoſe GREAT MASTERS whoſe opinions I have copiouſly cited, that they may be both an ornament and defence to my imperfect manual of CHRISTIAN PHILOSOPHY. Some of the greateſt *deceaſed* divines of the church of England, next to the ſcriptures, are my chief authority. Happy am I to ſit at the feet of ſuch inſtructors; men, whoſe learning and abilities were of the very firſt magnitude, and whoſe piety and goodneſs of heart ſeem to have vied, for excellence, with their vigorous underſtandings, and accurate knowledge of ſcriptural theology. It is honour enough to be merely inſtrumental in republiſhing their ſalutary doctrines, and giving them the inconſiderable ſanction of my public, though ſingle vote. If they were now alive, they would be moſt anxiouſly diligent, in the preſent

* Many who diſlike the diſcipline and communion of our church, firmly adhere to the *articles of it*.

ſtate

ſtate of Chriſtianity, in exciting the true ſpirit of vital and experimental religion. Never was there more occaſion for their zeal and activity than now; and it appears to me, that their mode of recommending Chriſtianity was a right mode, becauſe, among other reaſons, it has the teſt of experience in its favour.

The fact is incontrovertible, that in their times it was greatly ſucceſsful. The true ſpirit of Chriſtianity, during their miniſtry of the Goſpel, mightily grew and prevailed. Infidelity was uncommon and infamous; and the mild, meek, placid temper of the Goſpel was deemed, even in the higheſt ranks of ſociety, not only conducive to happineſs, but ornamental. Religious grace was valued above all *graceful* accompliſhments. Men gloried in maintaining, openly and conſiſtently, the Chriſtian character; and the force of truth, not weakened by falſe politics, made it even a faſhion.

I have laboured to revive the principles of thoſe times; not without a hope, that they may have ſimilar ſucceſs in our day, if

if duly encouraged by high example. Men are doubtleſs, NOW as well as ever, ſuſceptible of religious impreſſions, if properly enforced on EVANGELICAL authority. The times, it is ſaid, are altered; but let it be remembered, that men make the times, and that men are very much modelled by books and all public inſtruction.

It is certainly unwiſe, in the preſent adverſe circumſtances of Chriſtendom, to neglect or diſcountenance any mode of effectually diſſeminating and confirming the Chriſtian faith, more eſpecially any mode which has in paſt times been found ſucceſsful, and is authorized by ſcripture.

For myſelf, I muſt beg leave to ſay, what is indeed ſufficiently evident, that I have been in ſearch of truth, not of favour or advantage. I have deemed religion lovely enough to be wedded without a dowry. I have had no ſiniſter view, but have employed my hours of leiſure in a way which I thought might be moſt beneficial to my fellow-creatures and my

my country. If I am wrong in my doctrine; if my GREAT MASTERS have inſtructed me erroneouſly, I am open to conviction, and ſhall rejoice to be better informed. I will ſay with the poet, addreſſing the *Father of Lights*,

"If I am right, thy GRACE impart,
" Still in the right to ſtay;
" If I am wrong, O teach my HEART
" To find that better way.

In the mean time, I make this offering to my fellow-mortals, labouring, like myſelf, in purſuit of happineſs, though, many of them, in a different mode; and I dedicate it, with ſincere devotion, to TRUTH, PIETY, AND PEACE.

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APPENDIX.

No. I.

Curſory Remarks on one or two Objections in Mr. Paine's *laſt Pamphlet, againſt the Authenticity of the Goſpel.*

IT is much againſt my opinion of propriety to recommend to public notice the writings of infidels, by animadverting upon them; it is ſtill more ſo, to *quote* their cavils, though with an intent to refute them. What is this, indeed, but to contribute to the diſſemination of their errors, while it gratifies their vanity? Mr. Gibbon avowed that FAME was his object; and it may be ſuſpected, that the greater part of ſceptical or infidel writers are pleaſed with thoſe anſwers and refutations,

tations, which, though they are meant to diſcountenance them, yet do, in fact, contribute, more than any thing elſe, to their publicity, notoriety, or, as they may conceive, to their GLORY.

But with reſpect to Mr. Paine, his notoriety is already ſo great, as ſcarcely to admit of increaſe; and there is too much reaſon to fear, that his infidel writings will attract general notice, at leaſt among the lower claſſes, without any aid from controverſial oppoſition. I think, therefore, I ſhall do no harm, if, unfortunately, I ſhould do no good, by making one or two remarks on his recent attack on Chriſtianity.

Mr. Paine is ſuppoſed, by his partiſans, to have laid the axe to the root of revealed religion. His blows, indeed, are violent; but they miſs their aim. His weapon is blunted and repelled, by ſtriking againſt a ſolid ſubſtance. Many ſuch ſtrokes have, at various times, been levelled at Chriſtianity; but the hardy tree, rooted deeply in the hearts of men, and watered

watered by the dews of Heaven, has vegetated with freſh vigour, and, after the operation of lopping, diffuſed its branches with additional luxuriance.

In Mr. Paine's *theological* works there is, indeed, little NOVELTY. His objections have been frequently conſidered, and, for the moſt part, removed. They are, however, NEW to the young and the unlearned, who ſeldom poſſeſs time, books, or inclination, ſufficient to qualify them as judges of their ſolidity. Mr. Paine's political opinions contribute much to recommend, among many, his theological; and thus party zeal is unfortunately excited in favour of religious ſcepticiſm or actual infidelity. From a variety of cauſes, peculiar to the preſent times and circumſtances, there is too mnch reaſon to apprehend, that Mr. Paine's theological pamphlet is too favourably received; and that it will contribute to diffuſe licentiouſneſs, both of principles and practice. It is not from real novelty, or the peculiar ability of the author, but from temporary circumſtances, that

that it will derive its malignant efficacy. I am not preſumptuous enough in my own powers, to ſuppoſe myſelf able to counteract it. But I have attempted it throughout this book, not doubting that ſome of thoſe many learned and ingenious divines, who, by their high ſituation in the church, enjoy ample leiſure, poſſeſs extenſive libraries, and all other opportunities for information, will ſtep forward to oppoſe an attack, which tends to undermine the whole fabric of the viſible CHURCH, and which, if ſucceſsful, muſt render their high offices not only ſuperfluous, but ridiculous; their dignities not only badges of folly, but, which is worſe, of knaviſh hypocriſy.

Mr. Paine is an additional inſtance to prove that men, deeply immerſed in the affairs of the world, and conſidering its politics as matters of the firſt, if not the *only* importance, uſually bring with them diſpoſitions to the ſtudy of Chriſtianity, which render them blind to its EVIDENCE and EXCELLENCE. They come with a pride and confidence in their own reaſon,

a ſtate

a ſtate of mind peculiarly offenſive to the SOVEREIGN of Heaven, who reſiſteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble.

The kingdom of Chriſt not being of this world, they view it as *aliens*, not only with indifference, but diſaffection. Indeed, they ſeldom give themſelves the trouble to ſtudy, as they ought, the nature of its tranſcendent polity.

It is an old obſervation, and confirmed by daily experience, that men are apt to condemn what they do not underſtand. Mr. Paine, indeed, is not deficient in underſtanding. He has given indubitable proofs of great ſagacity; but his ſagacity, applied to religion, is that of the NATURAL man, as the Apoſtle deſcribes him. There is a SPIRITUAL UNDERSTANDING; an underſtanding irradiated by divine grace, neceſſary to comprehend the things of the Spirit, without which a man is ſcarcely better qualified to judge of the goſpel, as it is GRACE AND TRUTH, than the blind to decide on the beauty of a picture. He may deſcant on words and ſyllables. He

may view the letter of the ſcriptures as a critic, a logician, an hiſtorian; but there is a veil on his heart, which prevents him from perceiving that witneſs or teſtimony of the Spirit, which carries conviction, in defiance of all difficulties and obſcurities in the letter. The Goſpel is the *miniſtration of Spirit and life, and the* POWER OF GOD unto ſalvation. This POWER OF GOD is not to be limited in its action, to the ability of any man or ſet of men to ſuggeſt or anſwer objections to any particular portions of the ſcripture. It ſhines on, however men may cavil. Like the moon, it continues to illuminate the night, unaffected by the poor ignorant animals who bark at her benign radiance. There is internal evidence in Mr. Paine's pamphlet, that he is unhappily unacquainted with the miniſtration of the Spirit and the POWER of GOD, as it is deſcribed in the Goſpel, and experienced by true believers. He is out of his province, where he treats of theology, and reſembles the philoſo-

pher of antiquity, who gave lectures to Hannibal, on the art of war.

But Mr. Paine is not only ignorant of Chriſtianity; he is prejudiced againſt it. His politics appear to him incompatible with the power of the church; and to undermine the church, he levels his blow at the whole of Chriſtianity. He pierces Chriſt, to ſtab the prieſthood through his ſides.

As the policy of monarchical countries has made the church an ally of the ſtate, he endeavours to weaken the ſtate, by demoliſhing its ally. Religion in France, corrupted by political artifice, and depraved by ſuperſtition, was favourable to ſlavery. He transfers his hatred from religion ſo abuſed, to ALL religion but deiſm. He conſiders revelation as a mere ſtate contrivance; not aware that the church and kingdom of Chriſt ſubſiſt, independently of all external authority, in the hearts of all true believers, in every clime, united by the Holy Ghoſt, under their king and prieſt, JESUS CHRIST. The living

temple

temple of the human heart would ſtill ſtand, if all the temples of ſtone, in the violent and wicked contentions of politicians, were demoliſhed and ſwept away with the beſom of deſtruction. The whole legions of France, ſuppoſing them united under the banners of Mr. Paine, (and I am far from thinking that the whole of that nation, or even a majority, would enliſt in the cauſe of infidelity,) would be unable to deſtroy THIS TEMPLE, *not made with hands*, not cemented with mortar, but with the Spirit of holineſs and love. But Mr. Paine's PREJUDICE againſt local churches, (all which have been corrupted,) leads him, moſt unjuſtly and unphiloſophically, to hate the truly CATHOLIC *inviſible church*, which is far above the politics of this world, and too pure to admit the abuſes introduced by deſpotiſm and knavery impoſing upon folly.

Mr. Paine takes what has been called "a *ſhort way*," with the Chriſtians, or ſupporters of Chriſtianity. He goes through and explodes

explodes the whole of the Old and New Teſtament, in the pages of a trivial pamphlet. My limits will not, at preſent, ſuffer me to enter on the objections which he makes to the *Old Teſtament*. Indeed I am ready to confeſs myſelf unable to defend or explain all thoſe parts which are excepted againſt by Mr. Paine, and appear to be really difficult and obſcure. But they have often been defended and explained by others, with great learning and ſagacity.

I am more particularly concerned, as indeed are all Chriſtians, with the *New Teſtament*; and not ſo much with the LETTER, as with the SPIRIT. Mr. Paine's cavils againſt the LETTER have been often made, and well refuted. I beg the reader, who is not firmly ſettled in the faith by BETTER EVIDENCE, than any *human learning* can afford, to ſtudy with attention, adequate to the important ſubject, Dr. TOWNSON and Dr. LARDNER on the Goſpels, and Mr. WEST on the Reſurrection *. He will conclude, from a peruſal of their excellent

* Dr. Trapp on the Goſpels, is a very uſeful book for the unlearned.

books, that there is cauſe ſufficient for every pious, humble man to give his full aſſent to all the eſſential parts of the Goſpel hiſtory; to be rooted in faith, to reſt in hope, and to abound in charity. Let him wiſh Mr. Paine a BETTER MIND, and then ſuffer his books to take their natural courſe, as many of the ſame kind have done, to the gulph of oblivion.

I ſhall advert only to one or two principal objections made by Mr. Paine, leaving the reſt to thoſe who excel and delight in *critical* theology. From the ſpecimen I give, I mean no more than that the young or unlearned reader ſhould ſee that Mr. Paine is not yet entitled to the epithet beſtowed on one of the ſchoolmen, that of IRREFRAGABILIS, or the UNANSWERABLE.

I paſs by the indecency and blaſphemy of the introductory objections which he makes to the New Teſtament, with a contemptuous ſilence. All that is advanced on this occaſion, has been well conſidered and anſwered, long before Mr. Paine was brought into exiſtence.

I refer

I refer the reader to Dr. TOWNSON, for a ſatisfactory account of the difference in the *genealogies* of Chriſt, as given by St. Matthew and St. Luke; though I ſhall have occaſion to mention them preſently. In the mean time, I proceed to the GENERAL objection. The *general objection* to the credibility of the Goſpel hiſtory is made by Mr. Paine in the following words:

" The preſumption is," ſays he, " that " the books called the Evangeliſts, and " aſcribed to Matthew, Mark, Luke, and " John, were not written by Matthew, " Mark, Luke, and John, and that they " are IMPOSITIONS. The diſordered ſtate " of the hiſtory, in theſe few books, THE " SILENCE OF ONE BOOK UPON MATTERS " RELATED IN ANOTHER, and the DIS- " AGREEMENT that is to be found among " them, implies that they are the produc- " tions of ſome unconnected individuals, " *many years after the things* they pretend " to relate; each of whom made his own " LEGEND; and not the writings of men,

" *living intimately* together, as the men " called the Apoſtles are ſuppoſed to have " done; in fine, that they are MANUFAC- " TURED, as the books of the Old Teſta- " ment have been, by other perſons than " thoſe whoſe names they bear."

This paragraph evinces Mr. Paine's ignorance of the dates of the Goſpel's publication, the particular *occaſions* on which they were written, and the peculiar ſcope or purpoſe of each writer. It is an *allowed* truth, that all the Evangeliſts wrote a conſiderable *time after* the aſcenſion of our Saviour, at different periods, for different purpoſes, from different places, to different deſcriptions of men; all which the reader may ſee well explained in Dr. TOWNSON's diſcourſes on the Goſpel.

But for the ſake of readers buſily engaged in the world, who may not have read, or be inclined to read, Dr. Townſon's, or other books on the ſubject, I will ſubmit a few conſiderations, which, I think, will remove this *general* objection, which ariſes chiefly from " THE SILENCE OF ONE BOOK

" UPON

"UPON MATTERS RELATED IN THE "OTHER."

The Times and Places of writing the Four Goſpels were as follows:

Goſpels.	Place.	From our Lord's Aſcenſion.
St. Matthew's,	Judea,	64 yrs.
St. Mark's,	Rome,	64
St. Luke's,	Greece,	64
St. John's,	Epheſus,	68

Or, according to Dr. Owen,

St. Matthew's,	Jeruſalem, *for the uſe of the Jewiſh converts*,	38
St. Luke's,	Corinth, *for the uſe of the Gentile converts*,	53
St. Mark's,	Rome, *for the uſe of Chriſtians at large*,	63
St. John's,	Epheſus, *to confute the hereſy of* CERINTHUS,	69

The *times* of writing are differently given by the learned Dr. Mill, in his Prolegomena to the New Teſtament: thus,

			An. Dom.
St. Matthew	wrote	—	61
St. Mark,	—	—	63
St. Luke,	—	—	64
St. John,	—	—	97

Each of the Evangeliſts had a *particular* view or intention in writing his Goſpel hiſtory; at the ſame time that he calculated it for *general* information, in all ages of militant Chriſtianity.

By the way, I muſt obſerve, that the diſtance of time, from our Lord's aſcenſion, to the writing of the Goſpels, (erroneouſly ſtated by Dr. Watts, in the quotation from him in the preceding pages,) furniſhes me with an argument in favour of my main doctrine. During ſixty, ſeventy, or perhaps nearly a hundred years, Chriſtianity flouriſhed without the aſſiſtance of any written Goſpel. This muſt have been by the *Spirit's immediate* influence. It does not appear, that when the *apoſtolical epiſtles* were written, any of the Goſpels, which we now have, were extant or known. They are not mentioned in the epiſtles,

nor

nor is there any alluſion to them. Yet it is clear from the epiſtles, that there were large churches or ſocieties of Chriſtians—without a written Goſpel—except that which was written on the heart of the humble believer by the Spirit's miniſtration.

To return to Mr. Paine's objection, concerning the "*ſilence of one Goſpel on* "*matters related in another.*"

This will not appear at all wonderful, when it is conſidered, that St. Matthew wrote to the *Jews only*; St. Mark, (under the *dictation* of St. Peter,) to ALL Chriſtians; St. Luke, to the GENTILE converts; St. John, to certain *heretics*, who denied the pre-exiſtence and divinity of Chriſt; and that they wrote at very diſtant places, and at very different times, under circumſtances probably no leſs various. But, to be a little more particular. St. Matthew wrote at Jeruſalem, to the *Jews only*; thoſe, I mean, of the Jews, who were converted to Chriſtianity. As *they* lived near the ſcene of action, and many of them had probably obſerved our Saviour, and

heard his diſcourſes, he *omitted* many things, as well *known to them*, and mentioned others with a *conciſeneſs* which he would not have approved, had he been writing to *foreigners*, or perſons totally unacquainted with the ſubjects of his hiſtory. The other Evangeliſts very properly *vary* from him in *explaining* what he left leſs diſtinct, in *expatiating* where he obſerves a brevity, in *adding* what he omitted; as was reaſonable, ſince they wrote conſiderably *after* him, and to perſons, who, it muſt be ſuppoſed, were unacquainted with the cuſtoms, the language, and even the country of Judea.

If it be aſked, what becomes of the *inſpiration* of the Goſpels, if the writers thus conducted them according to the rules of *human prudence*? I anſwer, in the words of Dr. Townſon, "The Holy "Spirit ſanctified their hearts with a lively "and *powerful ſenſe of ſpiritual things*; "enlightened their minds with a juſt "knowledge of the truth; and endued "them, with wiſdom, (or *prudence*,) to "relate

" relate the life of Chriſt in a manner be-
" coming the ſubject, and ſuitable to their
" SEVERAL DESIGNS: and theſe gifts,
" which *exalted* the natural powers of their
" minds, without DESTROYING them,
" would produce *verity* and *propriety*, but
" *not* IDENTITY of relation." They reported ſuch words and deeds, as conduced to the purpoſe of converting or eſtabliſhing the perſons whom they *immediately* addreſſed; while the SPIRIT of God took care that the *whole of their hiſtory*, as contained in *four* narratives, ſhould convey information ſufficient, in all *neceſſary* points, not only for their *own* age, but for ALL ages of Chriſtianity.

" They VARY," ſays the objector, " and
" therefore they cannot be true and faith-
" ful narrators." But in what do they vary? Does one of them ſay that our Saviour roſe from the dead, and the other, that he did not? Do they vary in any important point of DOCTRINE? No; but they vary in a few *hiſtorical* circumſtances, which affect not the MAIN PURPOSE in the ſmalleſt de-

gree. Their variations in non-eſſentials, and their agreement in eſſentials, is a mark of veracity. Their variations prove that they did not write in concert, or with a deſign to deceive; for if they had, they would have taken care to have avoided what would expoſe them immediately to the objections of their opponents; and their agreement in eſſentials, in the grand purpoſe of ſhewing that Man was to be favoured with the Holy Spirit, is a proof that Providence ſuperintended them; and that they were ſo ſtrongly convinced of this truth, and had it ſo preſent to their minds, that they could not poſſibly *omit* it, or *vary* in *it*, however *elſe* they might vary.

Theophylact ſays, very ſenſibly, Δι' αυτο τουτο μαλλον αληθευουσιν, οτι μη κατα παντα ωμοφωνησαν. ενομιθησαν γαρ αν, οτι συγκαθισαντες αλληλοις και συμβουλευσαμενοι, εγραψαν. νυν δε ο παρελειψεν ουτος, εγραψεν εκεινος* και δια τουτο, δοκουσιν εν τισιν διαλλατ]ειν. "On this very account," ſays Theophylact, "they may be more eaſily be-

* Theophylact. *Proœm. in Matt. Evangelium.*

"lieved

" lieved to have ſpoken the *truth*, becauſe " they do not every where ſpeak alike; " for if they had, they would have been " ſuppoſed to have written in colluſion; " but, as the caſe is now, what one is *ſilent* " *upon*, another has written; and, *therefore*, " they appear in ſome things to differ;"— but they differ εν τοις ελαχιστοις, *in very minute things*—as he had juſt before obſerved. Still keeping in mind, that Mr. Paine's chief objection is, " THE SILENCE " OF ONE BOOK (of the Goſpel) UPON " MATTERS RELATED IN THE OTHER," let us now proceed to St. Mark.

St. Mark's Goſpel was dictated by St. Peter, who was acquainted with St. Matthew's. It was in many things *anticipated* by St. Matthew. It was publiſhed in Italy, perhaps at Rome, and addreſſed to Chriſtians in general; but particularly to the new converts, both pagan and Jewiſh. Some of them might have already ſeen St. Matthew's Goſpel, and all of them might hereafter ſee it; and therefore St. Mark is *ſilent* on many precepts and parables, as being already known

from the narrative of his predeceſſor. In ſome matters, St. Mark *explains* and *deſcribes more fully* than St. Matthew, becauſe he addreſſed himſelf in part to the *Gentiles*, who could not know ſo well as the Jews, to whom alone St. Matthew wrote, what related to the Jewiſh language, cuſtoms, ſcriptures, or topography. When he *repeats*, which is very often, for very good reaſons, what St. Matthew has told, he *adds* ſome circumſtance of *explanation*, neceſſary to the Gentiles, that is, to foreigners, who were very little acquainted with either the country or the inhabitants of Jeruſalem. It was neceſſary to repeat many facts related by St. Matthew, becauſe, in that age, the art of printing being unknown, and copies of the Goſpels very difficult to be procured, eſpecially by the poor, it muſt, in the nature of things, have happened frequently, that the perſons for whom St. Mark wrote, Jews at a great diſtance from Judea, and pagans, (both *newly converted*,) had never had a ſight of St. Matthew's Goſpel.

Very

Very difficult muſt it have been, in thoſe days, to have ſent many copies from Jeruſalem to Rome, even if many exiſted, and if the converts *near* Jeruſalem had not demanded ALL that could be multiplied by the ſlow proceſs of the hand-writing. St. Mark's narrative is therefore nearly the ſame as St. Matthew's, with the *addition* of ſuch matters as might be neceſſary to the perſons immediately addreſſed, and the *omiſſion* of other matters which were either not eſſential, or, if they were, might be learned from St. Matthew's Goſpel, already publiſhed.

St. Mark, it has been already ſaid, is ſuppoſed to have written under the entire direction, or rather the dictation, of St. Peter; and it is obſervable, that St. Peter is repreſented as *preſent* at all the actions and ſayings of our Lord recorded in this Goſpel. And this circumſtance will account for St. Mark's "*ſilence* on ſome "matters related by the other Evangeliſts." The narrative of St. Mark ſeems to be RESTRICTED, in great meaſure, to ſuch tranſactions

tranſactions as St. Peter was *preſent* at; which, while it adds to the authenticity of the narrative, accounts for the *omiſſion* of deeds or words, at which St. Peter was *not* preſent, and thus obviates Mr. Paine's objection.

St. Luke's Goſpel was deſigned for the *Gentiles only*. Of this there is much internal evidence. He ſtudiouſly avoids Hebrew words, and uſes, wherever it can be done, Greek terms, to expreſs the ideas of the Hebrew. And there is one moſt ſtriking particular in St. Luke, which aroſe from his addreſſing the Gentiles only. The fine PARABLE OF THE PRODIGAL, to be found in none other of the Goſpels, was admitted by St. Luke, becauſe it conveyed a doctrine highly encouraging to the GENTILE, who was that younger ſon, returned, at laſt, to his father, and received with affection. St. Matthew is *ſilent* upon this parable, becauſe writing, as he did, to the JEWS, he knew, eſpecially at that earlier period when he wrote, that it would not be agreeable

able to their narrow prejudices, and their ideas of *exclusive* salvation. St. Mark and St. John are *silent* upon it, because it was not necessary to their purposes.

St. Luke's genealogy of Christ differs much from St. Matthew's; and Mr. Paine triumphs greatly on the difference *. But let it be duly noticed, that St. Matthew, writing to the Jews only, was contented with tracing the genealogy of the Messiah, for their satisfaction, up to David and Abraham; while St. Luke, writing to the Gentiles, traced it up to ADAM, the father of all mankind, Gentile as well as Jew; thus encouraging the GENTILES, by making it appear that they, as descendants of Adam, were also related to the Messiah, as well as the Jews.

Another remarkable circumstance in St. Luke, evinces that the Evangelists adapted their narratives, as wisdom directed, to the particular descriptions of persons to whom they were immediately addressed. St. Luke mentions the name

* See Trapp on the Gospels.

of the Roman emperors that reigned when Chriſt was born, and when himſelf began to preach. It was the practice of the Gentiles to mark the æra of events by the reigning emperor. St. Matthew, St. Mark, and St. John obſerve a *ſilence* concerning the reigning emperor. It did not appear to them neceſſary or expedient to uſe this mode of *dating* events, when writing to Jews, or perſons acquainted with Judea and its hiſtory.

Let it be attended to, that there were in circulation, before ſome of the Goſpels were written, a great many *narratives* (διαγησεις) of our Saviour's life and death, by *unknown* authors, which being read in certain parts, might render it unneceſſary to dwell on ſome particulars which they might have recorded with truth and accuracy. It has long been my opinion, (but I offer it with the diffidence of one who ventures a conjecture,) that the four Goſpels which we now have, were written to ſupply the defects, correct the errors, and give confirmation to the truths,

truths, which appeared in theſe popular *narratives*, at which St. Luke ſeems to hint in the very entrance or introduction to his Goſpel. St. Luke ſpeaks not, when he ſays, that MANY *had taken in hand to ſet forth in* ORDER *a declaration of thoſe things which are moſt ſurely believed by us*, he ſpeaks not of ST. MATTHEW or ST. MARK by name. He gives them no preference. He could not mean by MANY, *two* only. He probably meant the ΔΙΑΓΗΣΕΙΣ * above-mentioned, which he ſeems to cenſure for inaccuracy. It would be highly credible, (if we had not

*There were *many* διηγησεις and παραδοσεις. But there were two very celebrated, and called Goſpels; the one, according to the Hebrews; the other, according to the Ægyptians. Theſe were a collection of facts and ſayings, collected from *oral tradition*. The firſt maintained its credit long after the publication of the four Evangeliſts, and was a favourite Goſpel. It was read in the church during three hundred years. Some think, and I ſubſcribe to their opinion, that this was the *original* HEBREW of St. Matthew. But there arguments are not wanting to prove that it was another.—See this very curious ſubject diſcuſſed in MILLII *Proleg.*

information)

information) that there were narratives handed about of merely *human* compoſition. Such events as had happened in Judea muſt have excited curioſity; and the pleaſure of relating extraordinary events naturally prompted men to gratify it. Goſpel hiſtories, therefore, abounded. The Goſpels of the *four* Evangeliſts were VARIED, according as the *neceſſity* which appeared to exiſt from the errors, the defects, or miſrepreſentations of the διαγησεις, or narratives, which were circulated among the perſons to whom the four Evangeliſts wrote, ſeemed to require.

But to proceed to St. John. He wrote a great many years after St. Matthew. The hiſtory of Chriſt, at near a hundred years after his aſcenſion, was probably pretty well known by the Goſpels, and the *common* narratives called διαγησεις and παραδοσεις. He wrote chiefly to correct miſtakes in DOCTRINE; giving at the ſame time a *narrative* for the uſe of thoſe who might ſtill be uninformed in the hiſtory. He wrote againſt a hereſy. He had to ſet men right as to the dignity

dignity of Chriſt. Therefore there are many things in his Goſpel on which the others are SILENT; and he, on the other hand, is *ſilent* on many things, becauſe *repetition* of what *they* had given the world would have been either of little uſe, or quite ſuperfluous, to the perſons whom he *immediately* addreſſed.

By thus fairly conſidering the different times, places, perſons, and other circumſtances, in which the ſeveral Goſpels were written, we ſhall not be at a loſs to account rationally, and to the ſatisfaction of every GOOD MIND, for omiſſions, variations, and additions, in the evangelical hiſtories; and the cavils of unbelievers will never, it is to be hoped, prevail upon ſerious, humble Chriſtians, who love truth, and ſeek it with ſimplicity of heart, unbiaſſed by *politics*, or worldly motives, to renounce the WRITTEN WORD, much leſs the SPIRIT of Chriſtianity.

But though the written word were proved to contain many marks of human infirmity, lapſes of memory, and errors of judgment,

ment, yet the good Chriſtian, having the WITNESS IN HIMSELF, would go on his way, rejoicing, hoping, and believing to the end. If no other event had been announced in the WRITTEN WORD, than that (agreeably to general and uniform TRADITION) the Holy Ghoſt was ſent to reſide among men, after our Lord's aſcenſion, this alone would be GLAD TIDINGS, or an *evangelium* ſufficient to make him exult in the name and privileges of a Chriſtian. If the four Goſpels are *uninſpired*, yet the writers, as good men and firm believers, were certainly under the *ordinary* influence of the Holy Spirit, and related the truth as exactly as their abilities qualified them for narration. They had, moſt evidently, no intention to deceive. Impoſtors could never have written with ſuch ſimplicity. So that though their hiſtories ſhould be found not quite exempt from human errors, as no other hiſtory ever was exempt, yet ſtill the main point of revelation is clear. The gift of the Spirit is announced by them. It has in all ages of the church been

been EXPERIENCED; and though all the books in the world were deſtroyed, it would remain. The *tradition* is now too extenſive to be ever loſt. And what mortal, who, as the poet ſays, comes into the world "juſt to look about him and to die," will preſume to ſay, that the ETERNAL GOD cannot make his will known to man, by conſtant and immediate revelation, without the aid of the penman or the printer? Diſputants, indeed, contending for praiſe and preferment, will wrangle on this, and all other points; but while they wrangle, the humble Chriſtian believes, and is happy.

There are two *particulars* of variation, which Mr. Paine lays great ſtreſs upon, and which, therefore, I ſhall take under curſory conſideration.

1ſt. "Not any of theſe writers," ſays he, "agree in reciting exactly "the written inſcription, ſhort as it is, "which they tell us was put over Chriſt "when he was crucified. Matthew ſays "it was, *This is Jeſus, the King of the* "*Jews*; Mark, *The King of the Jews*; "Luke,

" Luke, *This is the King of the Jews*;
" John, *Jeſus of Nazareth, the King of*
" *the Jews.*"

This objection has no more claim to novelty than importance; and I only conſider it, to ſhew the unlearned reader how eaſily it may be obviated. Let him conclude, as he may fairly do, that moſt of Mr. Paine's objections, however plauſible, may, upon impartial examination, be removed.

The words on the croſs were in THREE languages; Hebrew, Greek, and Latin. St. Matthew, writing to the Hebrews, probably ſelected that which was in their own language, in which the word JESUS ſignifies a Saviour. As this was intended to be read by the Jews, it might be deſigned, by Pilate's adviſers, to heighten the inſult and mockery, by calling Chriſt a Saviour, as well as a king: in Hebrew, it certainly admitted of that interpretation, while it alſo ſtood for a proper name.

St. Mark, writing at Rome, probably ſelected the LATIN words.—Latin was

was *Pontius Pilate*'s own language; and he, probably, as it is well known was the caſe with the Romans, prided himſelf in not uſing any other language than his own; ſo he omits, in this inſcription, which being Latin, may be ſuppoſed to be of *his* own dictation, the Hebrew words *Jeſus* and *Nazareth*, and inſerts, conſiſtently with the uſual brevity of Latin inſcriptions, *Rex Judæorum*—the King of the Jews.—Indeed the words, *This is*, were in courſe underſtood, and might be ſupplied by the Evangeliſts; but they were inſerted by St. Matthew, and were *common* to *all* the inſcriptions. St. Luke, like St. Mark, took *his* from the Latin *Rex Judæorum*.

St. John's is probably from the *Greek* inſcription. And he ſays, "Jeſus of Na-"zareth, the King of the Jews," which, there is no doubt, was an exact tranſlation of the Greek words. He ſays, addreſſing *foreigners*, as the inſcription itſelf alſo did, "Jeſus of *Nazareth*." The word Jeſus would not convey the idea of a Saviour to the Greeks; it was to them only

only a proper name, therefore he adds the *Nazarene*, or "of Nazareth," as a matter of hiſtorical information. The Jews knew the native place of Jeſus, but the Greeks did not, as Nazareth was an inconſiderable town. This addition might be intended as a mark of contempt, and to ſhew the Greeks, or foreigners in general, that the Jews diſdained a king who originated from ſo paltry a place as Nazareth. Nathaniel's queſtion in St. John is, "Can "any good thing come out of Nazareth?" Thus it appears, that the inſcription being in *three different languages*, might, for very good reaſons, in the opinion of thoſe who placed it over the croſs, have ſome *variations* adapted to the various readers, and conſiſtent with the views of the various writers.

Mr. Paine adds, that "Mark ſays "Chriſt was crucified at the third hour "—nine in the morning; and John "ſays, it was the ſixth hour—twelve at "noon." Here a note is added in the margin; "According to St. John, ſen-"tence was not paſſed till the ſixth hour,

" (noon,) and conſequently the execution
" could not be till the afternoon; but
" Mark ſays expreſsly, he was crucified
" at the third hour—nine in the morn-
" ing."

Here certainly is a difficulty; but the learned have informed us that St. John parted the days as we do, at midnight *, *contrary* both to the Roman and Jewiſh cuſtom; the ſixth hour, therefore, is not noon, but ſix o'clock in the morning, when ſentence was paſſed; and various circumſtances might take place, added to the ſlowneſs of the proceſſion, to retard the execution till nine, the very time fixed by St. Mark. St. John's method of dividing the day was not Jewiſh or Roman, as it has been ſaid, but ASIATIC. St. John either learned or taught this method in Aſia Minor, where were ſeven churches, which differed from others in the time of keeping Eaſter; and affirmed, that they followed, in this variation of times and ſeaſons, the inſtitution of St. John;

* According to the *Nychthemeron*.

a circumſtance which is very material, as it ſhews that St. John had turned his attention to the regulation of time.

Dr. Townſon, to whom every ſtudent of the LITERAL Goſpel is much indebted, advances other arguments on this head, for which I refer to his Diſcourſes.

It is inconſiſtent with my ideas of propriety to quote many of Mr. Paine's objections *; and indeed my limits will not admit a full examination of his book, if I were inclined to go through it, or, on the preſent occaſion, thought it neceſſary.

In anſwer to what Mr. Paine has ſaid againſt that part of the evangelical hiſtory which relates to the *interment*, *reſurrection*, and *aſcenſion* of our Saviour, I refer the reader to another volume of Dr. Townſon's, expreſsly written on theſe ſubjects, if any one thinks it neceſſary to reconſider them, on account of Mr. Paine's objections. My opinion is, that they who have the *witneſs of the Spirit*, will

* I would not cull the flowers of thoſe weeds, whoſe roots I wiſh to deſtroy.

not

not be at all concerned about Mr. Paine's cavils, except from the benevolent motive of endeavouring to prevent their ill effect on the thoughtleſs and malignant part of mankind, who may be confirmed in their neglect or hatred of Chriſtianity, by his virulent invective againſt it.

Thoſe who believe, not only with an *hiſtorical* faith, but with the FAITH THAT GOD GIVETH; not only in the letter, written on periſhable materials, but alſo, in the Spirit, the everlaſting Goſpel of *immediate* grace, will not be in the leaſt danger of WAVERING, even if the infidels could prove that the ſcriptures are merely human narratives, with the errors of humanity.

It is preſumptuouſly ſaid by Hoſius, biſhop of Warmia in Poland, "We "have now bid adieu to the ſcriptures, "having ſeen ſo many, not only dif- "ferent, but contrary interpretations of "them. Let us rather hear God him- "ſelf ſpeak, than apply ourſelves, or "truſt our ſalvation, to thoſe jejune

" elements. There is no need," he proceeds, " of being ſkilful in the law " and the ſcriptures, but of being taught " of God. That labour is ill em- " ployed," ſays the prelate, " that is " beſtowed on the ſcriptures; for the " ſcripture is a creature, and a beg- " garly element." Far be from us to think ſo. Chriſt commanded his immediate *hearers* to ſearch the *ſcriptures*; and St. Paul ſays, " they are *profitable* " for doctrine, for reproof, for correc- " tion, for inſtruction in righteouſneſs, " that the man of God may be per- " fect, thoroughly furniſhed unto all " *good works*;" that is, they are *profitable*, or conducive to the improvement of us in morality, as well as in the true doctrine. But although we cannot ſay what Hoſius erroneouſly ſaid; yet we may ſay, becauſe the ſcripture ſays it, " God's *grace* is ſufficient for us"—his grace *mediately* afforded by his word, and *immediately* by his actual influence; and having the TEACHING OF GOD, we ſhall

ſhall not renounce our faith, though the Chubbs and the Paines ſhould find matter for cenſure or ridicule in all the written books, from Geneſis to the Apocalypſe. FAITH, we read and know, is the gift of God; and he it is who *worketh in us* both to will and to do of his good pleaſure.

"The word," ſays Dr. Ridley, "has "not power of itſelf to work, in our "UNDERSTANDINGS, a faith in God, "nor to influence the WILL to a re-"pentance from *dead works*, without "the Holy Ghoſt."

But he in whom the Holy Ghoſt has worked a faith in God, and whoſe will the Holy Ghoſt has influenced to repentance from dead works, may ſtand faſt in the faith, rooted and eſtabliſhed, in defiance of all that has been ſaid by men engroſſed by this world, and poſſeſſing its wiſdom; men who have ariſen in almoſt every age, and confirmed the Chriſtian doctrine, by promoting its diſcuſſion, and awakening Chriſtians from the ſlumber of ſecurity.

" When," ſays Dr. Watts, " we are " attacked with argument to baffle our " faith, and when falſe doctrines blow " ſtrong, and carry away many, how ſhall " we be able to ſtand our ground, and " hold faſt our faith in Chriſt, if we have " not the *inward witneſs*, the BEGINNING " OF ETERNAL LIFE? Therefore it is " that ſo many Chriſtians WAVER and are " led away, becauſe they feel ſo little " of the efficacy of the Holy Ghoſt in " their hearts."

If this then be the cauſe of *wavering* and falling away from Chriſt, I hope the believers in Chriſtianity, and lovers of their fellow-creatures, will ſecond, by their own endeavours, this attempt of mine, to promote the prevalence of a belief in the *energy* of the HOLY GHOST. The attempt is expoſed to calumny and violent oppoſition. But every thing is to be borne with patience, in the cauſe of God and man.

Mr. Paine profeſſes to be a believer in God, and a friend to man. It is, indeed,

deed, aſtoniſhing, that an advocate for the *rights of man* ſhould ſet his face againſt the Goſpel of Jeſus Chriſt; for it is certain that the Goſpel is the book, of all that were ever written, that favours moſt the rights of man, and the cauſe of equal liberty. Jeſus Chriſt aboliſhed ſlavery in Europe. Jeſus Chriſt has humbled the rich and mighty. Jeſus Chriſt has given a conſequence to the POOR *, which they never

* The New Teſtament abounds with paſſages, expreſſive of indignation againſt thoſe among RICH men, who *abuſe* wealth and power, for the purpoſes of oppreſſion, cruelty, and deſpotiſm. As a ſpecimen, I quote the following from the Epiſtle of St. JAMES.

" Go to, now, ye RICH men; weep and howl " for your miſeries that ſhall come upon you.

" Your riches are corrupted, and your garments " are moth-eaten.

" Your gold and ſilver is cankered, and the ruſt " of them ſhall be a witneſs againſt you, and ſhall " eat your fleſh as it were fire: ye have heaped " treaſure together for the laſt days.

" Behold the HIRE OF THE LABOURERS " WHICH HAVE REAPED DOWN YOUR FIELDS, " which is of you kept back by fraud, crieth;

never poſſeſſed amid the boaſted free-dom of Greece and Rome. Jeſus Chriſt has done more to deſtroy the inſolent diſtinctions which aroſe from the ſpirit of tyranny, than was ever done before or after him; and Jeſus Chriſt ſuffered death for this beneſaction to all mankind, as a ſeditious innovator, and an enemy to Cæſar. Jeſus Chriſt is therefore entitled to the gratitude and veneration of every friend to truth, juſtice, and humanity, even if he were no more than a man, and his religion untrue. What have Sydney, Hampden, Locke, done or ſaid, with ſuch effect, in the cauſe of liberty, and in favour of the maſs of mankind, as Jeſus Chriſt? Let then all the friends of liberty and man be lovers of Jeſus Chriſt; and let not their zeal for

" and the cries of them that have REAPED are en-
" tered into the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth.
" Ye have lived in pleaſure on the earth, and
" been wanton; ye have nouriſhed your hearts, as
" in a *day* of SLAUGHTER:
" Ye have *condemned* and *killed* the JUST."
JAMES, v. 1—6.

reforming

reforming the corruptions of Chriſtianity, cauſed by ſtateſmen, wiſhing to render it ſubſervient to political views, lead them to renounce the comfortable, liberal, equalizing doctrines of the *genuine* Goſpel.

The Goſpel recommends PEACE, and infallibly produces, by the Spirit's benign influence, ſuch diſpoſitions of mind, as muſt of neceſſity, if they were to prevail among the rulers of the world, put an end to all offenſive war. It has not yet done ſo, for it has not yet ſufficiently prevailed among the rulers of the world. But it has certainly ſoftened the rigours of war; a favourable preſage of its future efficacy, in totally aboliſhing it.

I wiſh Mr. Paine, as a politician and a philanthropiſt, if he be ſuch, not to oppugn the great promoter of PEACE and LIBERTY. As a fellow man, (I wiſh I could add, a fellow Chriſtian,) I warn him, from the kindeſt motives, to beware leſt he be guilty of blaſphemy againſt the Holy Ghoſt.

Mr. Paine himſelf ſays, "*The great* "*trait in the character of Jeſus Chriſt is* "PHILANTHROPY." Why ſhould Mr. Paine, then, oppoſe the prevalence of his benign doctrines? Chriſtianity is a friend to *order*, but an enemy to *deſpotiſm* of every kind and degree. Why ſhould Mr. Paine, then, join with the wicked deſpots of the earth, in the endeavour to exterminate Chriſtianity? The late KING OF PRUSSIA, the greateſt deſpot and butcher of mankind, was the *prince* of the *unbelievers*. He made infidelity a faſhion in France; and behold the conſequences! May they never extend to this country; where, God grant that LIBERTY may continue unimpaired by deſpotiſm or licentiouſneſs; and RELIGION flouriſh, uncorrupted by hypocriſy or ſuperſtition, and unſhaken by the aſſaults of infidelity.

No. II.

SINCE, in conformity to the Scriptures, I have recommended PRAYER * as one of the beſt modes of obtaining the *evidence*, and experiencing the *excellence*, of of the Chriſtian religion, I think it expedient to add ſome directions to facilitate the proper performance of this duty; and, for the ſake of AUTHORITY, I have ſelected them from Biſhop WILKINS, the firſt divine and philoſopher of his age.

* Πολυ ἰσχυει ΔΕΗΣΙΣ ΔΙΚΑΙΟΥ ΕΝΕΡΓΟΥΜΕΝΗ.
Jam. v. 16.

This is tranſlated, "The effectual fervent "prayer of the righteous man availeth much," which is tautology—for an *effectual* prayer, of courſe, *availeth*. It ſhould be tranſlated, "The "prayer of a righteous or juſt man, being ENER-"GIZED by the inward operation of the Spirit, "availeth much."

" The firſt and chief matter to be " prayed for, is the ſanctification of our " natures—that God's *kingdom may come* " into our hearts—that he would give " unto us *a new heart, and put a new* " *Spirit within us*—that he would take " from us our ſtony heart, and beſtow " upon us hearts of fleſh—that he would " put within us the law of the ſpirit of " life, which may make us free from the " law of ſin and death—that we may put " on the new man, which, after God, is " created in righteouſneſs and true holi- " neſs—that we may be regenerate, and " become new creatures, being born " again of that incorruptible ſeed, the " word of God.

" That God would grant us, according to " the riches of his glory, to be ſtrength- " ened with might by his Spirit in the in- " ward man.

" That he would eſtabliſh our hearts " unblameable in holineſs before God,

" Ezekiel, xxxvi. 26. Rom. viii. 7. Eph. iv. " 24. 1 Pet. i. 23. Eph. iii. 16.

" even

" even our Father, at the coming of the " Lord Jeſus Chriſt, with all his ſaints.

" That the Spirit of Chriſt may dwell " in us—that we may continue in the " grace of God, and in the faith, ground- " ed and ſettled, and may not be moved " away from the hope of the Goſpel.

" Of this kind is the petition of *David* " for himſelf—*Create in me a clean heart,* " *O Lord, and renew a right ſpirit within* " *me.* And the Apoſtle for others—The " God of peace ſanctify you throughout, " that your whole ſpirit, and ſoul, and " body may be preſerved blameleſs unto " the coming of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt.

" That we may be *transformed by the* " *renewing of our minds*—that we may be " able to have a *ſpiritual diſcerning of the* " *things of God*; being wiſe to that which " is good, but ſimple and harmleſs to that " which is evil.

" 1 Theſſ. iii. 13. Rom. viii. 11. Acts, xiii. 43. " Col. i. 13. Pſal. li. 10. 1 Theſſ. v. 23. " Rom. xii. 2. 1 Cor. ii. iv. Rom. xvi. 19.

" That

" That he would purge our conſciences
" from DEAD WORKS, to ſerve the *living*
" God.

" That they may be tender of his glory,
" and our own good; truly performing
" the offices which belong unto them,
" both in accuſing and excuſing us, ac-
" cording to the ſeveral occaſions.

" That he would *circumciſe our hearts*,
" that we may *ſet our affections on things*
" *above, and not on earthly matters*—that
" we may not be deceived with falſe ap-
" pearances, but may *approve the things*
" *that are moſt excellent*.

" That he would reform and ſanctify
" our *wills*, that we may in every thing
" ſubmit them unto his; *delighting to do*
" *his will*; *not ſeeking our own will, but*
" *the will of him that ſent us*.

" That he would rectify our *memories*,
" making them more faithful in *retaining*
" all ſuch holy leſſons as we ſhall learn, in
" recalling them to mind, according to

" Heb. ix. 14. Rom. ii. 29. Col. iii. 2.
" Phil. i. 10. Pſ. xl. 8. Joh. v. 30.

" oppor-

" opportunities; that we may be always
" ready to *ſtir up our minds by way of re-*
" *membrance*, that we may never forget
" God.

" And ſo (for our parts, or outward
" man,) that we may become the *temple of*
" *God, where his Spirit may dwell:* that
" we may *preſent our bodies a living* ſacri-
" fice, *holy, acceptable to God, which is*
" *our reaſonable ſervice:* that all our parts
" and *members may be inſtruments of right-*
" *eouſneſs unto holineſs.*

" In which deſires we may ſtrengthen
" our faith with ſuch arguments as theſe:

" God only is *able for this great work:*
" *in us dwelleth nothing that is good.* It
" is he that muſt *work in us both to will*
" *and to do of his good pleaſure.* It is not
" in our power to regenerate ourſelves;
" for *we are not born of blood, nor of the*
" *will of the fleſh, nor of the will of man;*
" (that is, not of natural created ſtrength,)

" 2 Pet. iii. 1. Deut. viii. 11. 1 Cor. iii. 16.
" Rom. xii. 1. Rom. vi. 13—19. Rom. vii. 18.
" Phil. ii. 13. Joh. i. 13.

" *but of God.* And he is able to do *exceed-*
" *ing abundantly above all that we can aſk*
" *or think.* It is as eaſy for him to make
" us good, as to bid us be ſo.

" He is *willing*, and hath promiſed to
" *give unto us a new Spirit:* to *put his*
" *law into our inward parts, to write it in*
" *our hearts. And if men that are evil*
" *know how to give good gifts to their chil-*
" *dren, how much more ſhall our Heavenly*
" *Father give the Holy Spirit to them that*
" *aſk him?* He hath profeſſed it to be his
" own will, *even our ſanctification*; and he
" cannot deny us the performance of his
" own will. He hath promiſed, that thoſe
" who *hunger and thirſt after righteouſneſs,*
" *ſhall be filled.* And therefore, if he has
" in any meaſure given us this hunger,
" we need not doubt that he will give us
" this *fulneſs* likewiſe. He hath ſaid that
" *he delights to dwell with the ſons of men.*
" And what reaſon have we to doubt the

" Eph. iii. 20. Ezek. xxxvi. 26. Jer. xxxi. 33.
" Luke, xi. 13. Theſ. iv. 3. Mat. v. 6. Prov.
" viii. 31.

" ſucceſs

" ſucceſs of our deſires, when we beg of " him to do that which he delights in?

" The next thing to be prayed for, is " the obedience of our lives, anſwerable " to that in the Lord's Prayer—thy will " be done on earth as it is in Heaven. " And here, likewiſe, we are to petition " for ſpiritual grace, and abilities, both " to *perform*, and to *continue*, and to *in-* " *creaſe* in all holy duties.

" For the *performance* of them, That he " would *lead us into the paths of righteouſ-* " *neſs*—that *with ſimplicity and godly ſin-* " *cerity we may have our converſation in* " *this world*—that *denying all ungodlineſs* " *and worldly luſts, we may live ſoberly,* " *righteouſly, and godly, in this preſent* " *world*—that God would *give us grace,* " *whereby we may ſerve him acceptably* " *with reverence and godly fear*—that we " may *not any more be conformed unto this* " *world*—that *being dead unto ſin, we may* " *live unto righteouſneſs: not any longer*

" Pſal. xxiii. 3. 2 Cor. i. 12. Tit. ii. 12.
" Heb. xii. 28. Rom. xii. 2. 1 Pet. ii. 21.

" *ſpending*

" *ſpending the reſt of our time in the fleſh,*
" *to the luſts of men, but to the will of*
" *God*—that *the time paſt of our lives may*
" *ſuffice to have ſerved divers luſts*—that
" for the future we may *walk as obedient*
" *children, not faſhioning ourſelves accord-*
" *ing to the former luſts of our ignorance;*
" *but as he who has called us is holy, ſo we*
" *may be holy in all manner of conver-*
" *ſation.*

" To this purpoſe is that deſire of Da-
" vid, *O that my ways were directed to*
" *keep thy ſtatutes!* And in another place,
" *Teach me to do thy will, for thou art my*
" *God: let thy good Spirit lead me into the*
" *land of uprightneſs.* Elſewhere—*Shew*
" *me thy ways, O Lord, and teach me thy*
" *paths: lead me into thy truth, and teach*
" *me; for thou art the God of my ſalva-*
" *tion. Teach me thy ways, O Lord, and*
" *I will walk in thy truth; unite my heart*
" *to fear thy name.*

" 1 Pet. iv. 2, 3. Ib. i. 14. Pſal. cxix. 5.
" Pſal. cxliii. 10. Ib. xxv. 4, 5. Ib. lxxxvi. 11.

" For

" For our *continuance* in them—*That*
" *we may ſerve him without fear, in holi-*
" *neſs and righteouſneſs before him, all the*
" *days of our lives:* being *ſtedfaſt and un-*
" *moveable, always abounding in the work*
" *of the Lord—Holding faith and a good*
" *conſcience—Patiently continuing in well-*
" *doing, without wearineſs, as knowing*
" *that in due time we ſhall reap, if we*
" *faint not—Holding faſt the profeſſion of*
" *our faith, without wavering*—that our
" hearts *may be eſtabliſhed with grace*;
" that amidſt all our outward changes and
" loſſes, we may ſtill hold faſt our inte-
" grity.

" Thus the Apoſtle prays for the *Theſ-*
" *ſalonians*, that God would *eſtabliſh them*
" *in every good word and work.*

" For our *increaſe* in them—That God
" would make all grace to abound *to-*
" *wards us*—that we *always having all-*

" Luke, i. 74, 75. 1 Cor. xv. 18. 1 Tim.
" i. 19. Rom. ii. 7. Gal. vi. 9. Heb. x. 23.
" Ib. xiii. 9. Job, ii. 3. 1 Theſ. ii. 17. 2 Cor.
" ix. 8.

" *ſufficiency*

" *ſufficiency to all things, may abound to*
" *every good work*—that we may *be ſtrong*
" *in the Lord, and in the power of his*
" *might:* being *filled with the fruits of*
" *righteouſneſs, unto the glory and praiſe of*
" *God*—that *forgetting thoſe things which*
" *are behind, and reaching unto thoſe things*
" *which are before, we may continually*
" *preſs towards the mark for the prize of*
" *the high calling of God.*

" Thus doth the Apoſtle pray for the
" *Hebrews*—*The God of peace make you*
" *perfect in every good work, to do his will,*
" *working in you that which is well-*
" *pleaſing in his ſight.*—And *Epaphras,*
" for the Coloſſians—That they might
" ſtand perfect and complete in all the
" will of God.

" Next to the precepts of the law, we
" are to conſider the duties which the
" Goſpel requires of us, namely, that we
" ſhould *repent* and *believe*—that we ſhould
" be careful to *perform*, to *continue*, and

" 1 Theſ. iv. 1. Eph. vi. 10. Phil. i. 11.
" Ib. iii. 14. Heb. xiii. 20, 21. Col. iv. 12.

" *increaſe*

" *increaſe* in all thoſe particular duties and
" graces which are comprehended under
" thoſe two general heads.

" So that from hence we are directed
" to pray,

" For *repentance*—That ſince God
" hath, *in love to our ſouls*, vouchſafed
" unto us, in his Goſpel, this privilege of
" *repentance*, which the covenant of works
" did not admit of, that he would alſo
" give us hearts for it, *granting us re-*
" *pentance unto life*—that he would con-
" vince us of the danger, and folly, and
" pollution of our ſins, enabling us to
" mourn over them; beſtowing upon us
" *broken and contrite ſpirits*—diſſolving
" our ſtony hearts into that *godly ſorrow*,
" *which worketh repentance to ſalvation*
" *not to be repented of*—That we may
" ſearch and try our ways, and turn unto
" the Lord—*Bringing forth fruits meet for*
" *repentance*—Labouring *to draw nigh*

" Acts, xi. 18. Pſal. li. 17. 2 Cor. vii. 10.
" Lam. iii. 40. Mat. iii. 8.

" *unto*

" *unto God, by cleanſing our hands, and* " *purifying our hearts.*

" For *faith*—That God would diſcover " to us the great need of a Saviour; and " ſince he hath ſet forth *his Son to be a pro-* " *pitiation through faith in his blood, and* " *hath made him the Author of eternal ſal-* " *vation to all that obey him*, that he would " win over our ſouls to an earneſt endea- " vour of acquaintance with him, and " high eſteem of him.

" That God, *who commandeth the light* " *to ſhine out of darkneſs, would ſhine into* " *our hearts, to give us the light of the* " *knowledge of the glory of God, in the* " *face of Jeſus Chriſt*—that he would " make us more eſpecially inquiſitive after " the ſaving experimental knowledge of " him, in whom are laid up the *treaſures* " *of wiſdom and knowledge*; whom to " know, is perfect wiſdom, and eternal " life.

" James, iv. 8. Rom. iii. 25. Heb. v. 9.
" 2 Cor. iv. 6. Col. ii. 3.

" That

" That he would *count us worthy of his*
" *holy calling, and fulfil in us all the good*
" *pleaſure of his goodneſs, and the work of*
" *faith with power*—that *the name of the*
" *Lord Jeſus Chriſt may be glorified in us,*
" *and we in him.*

" That Chriſt *may dwell in our hearts*
" *by faith, that we may be rooted and*
" *grounded in love; may be able to com-*
" *prehend with all ſaints what is the*
" *breadth, and length, and depth, and*
" *height, and know the love of Chriſt,*
" *which paſſeth knowledge, that we may*
" *be filled with all the fulneſs of God.*

" That we may truly value *the exceed-*
" *ing riches of his grace, in his kindneſs*
" *towards us through Chriſt Jeſus*—Glo-
" rying in his Goſpel, *as being the power*
" *of God to ſalvation*—*Counting all things*
" *but loſs and dung for the excellency of the*
" *knowledge of Chriſt Jeſus, that we may*
" *win him, and be found in him; not hav-*
" *ing our own righteouſneſs, which is of the*

" 2 Theſ. i. 11, 12. Eph. iii. 17. Ib. ii. 7.
" Romi. 16. Phil. iii. 8.

" *law,*

" *law, but that which is through the faith*
" *of Chriſt.*

" That in all eſtates and conditions, we
" may learn to *live by faith.*

" In regard of our *temporal* life, with all
" the various circumſtances of it, whether
" *proſperity*, that by his grace of faith,
" we may keep our hearts in an holy frame
" of humility, meekneſs, diſengagement
" from the world, and all outward confi-
" dences; or *adverſity*, wherein this grace
" may ſerve to ſweeten our afflictions, to
" ſupport us under them, teaching us to
" profit by them, to bear them meekly,
" to triumph over them; aſſuring the
" heart, that nothing is but by the diſ-
" poſal of God's providence, who is in-
" finitely wiſe, and merciful, and faith-
" ful.

" In regard of *ſpiritual* life, both for our
" own *juſtification*, that we may not expect it
" from our own ſervices or graces; *not*
" *having our own righteouſneſs, but that*
" *which is through the faith of Chriſt,*
" *the righteouſneſs which is of God by*
" *faith.*

" *faith.* And ſo for the life of *ſanctifica-*
" *tion; that we may not live unto ourſelves,*
" *but unto him who died for us, and roſe*
" *again*—that our *converſation may be as*
" *becometh the Goſpel of Chriſt, ſtanding*
" *faſt in one ſpirit, with one mind, ſtriving*
" *together for the faith of the Goſpel.* Al-
" ways remembering that we are not our
" own, but *bought with a price,* and
" therefore ſhould make it our buſineſs
" to glorify Chriſt *with our bodies and*
" *Spirits, which are his.*

" That he would work in us a *lively*
" *faith,* as may make us rich in good
" works, that we may demean ourſelves
" as becomes *our profeſſed ſubjection to the*
" *Goſpel of Chriſt; walking worthy of that*
" *vocation wherewith we are called,* as
" becomes *children of light*—Being *holy in*
" *all manner of converſation*—*putting on*
" *the Lord Jeſus Chriſt; exerciſing our-*
" *ſelves unto godlineſs*—Walking upright-

" Phil. iii. 9. 2 Cor. v. 15. Phil. i. 27.
" 1 Cor. vi. 20. James, ii. 20. 2 Cor. ix. 13.

" ly, *according to the truth of the Goſpel,*
" *diligently following every good work*—
" Shewing, out of *a good converſation, our*
" *works, with meekneſs and wiſdom*—That
" we may *adorn the doctrine of God our Sa-*
" *viour in all things*—Conſidering *that we*
" *are created in Chriſt Jeſus unto good*
" *works, that we ſhould walk in them*—
" *Having our converſation in Heaven;*
" *walking worthy of the Lord, unto all*
" *pleaſing, being fruitful in all good works.*
" That every one of us who *profeſſeth the*
" *name of Chriſt, may depart from iniquity*
" —Becauſe *for this reaſon was the Goſpel*
" *preached to thoſe that are dead in ſin,*
" *that they may live according to God in*
" *Spirit.*

That we may give all diligence, to add
" to our faith, virtue; and to virtue,
" knowledge; and to knowledge, tem-

" Eph. iv. 2.	Ib. v. 8.	Rom. xiii. 14.
" 1 Tim. iv. 7.	Gal. ii. 14.	1 Tim. v. 10.
" James, iii. 13.	Tit. ii. 10.	Eph. ii. 10.
" Phil. iii. 20.	Gal. i. 10.	2 Tim. xii. 19.

" perance;

" perance; and to temperance, patience;
" and to patience, godlineſs; and to
" godlineſs, brotherly kindneſs; and to
" brotherly kindneſs, charity; that theſe
" things being in us, and abounding, we
" may not be barren or unfruitful in the
" knowledge of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt,
" but may hereby clear up unto ourſelves
" the evidences of our calling and elec-
" tion.

" That we may *deny all ungodlineſs and*
" *worldly luſts, living ſoberly, righteouſly,*
" *and godly, in this preſent world, looking*
" *for that bleſſed hope, and that glorious*
" *appearing of the great God, and our Sa-*
" *viour Jeſus Chriſt, who gave himſelf for*
" *us, that he might redeem us from all ini-*
" *quity, and purify unto himſelf a peculiar*
" *people, zealous of good works*—conſider-
" ing that *he ſhall be revealed from Heaven*
" *with his mighty angels, in flaming fire, to*
" *take vengeance on thoſe who obey not his*
" *Goſpel, who ſhall be puniſhed with ever-*

" 1 Pet. iv. 8. 2 Pet. i. 5—8. Tit. ii. 12, 13.
" 2 Theſſ. i. 7.

" *laſting deſtruction, from the preſence of*
" *the Lord, and from the glory of his*
" *power, when he ſhall come to be glorified*
" *in his ſaints, and to be admired of all*
" *them that believe in that day—For if he*
" *that deſpiſed Moſes's law, died without*
" *mercy, under two or three witneſſes, of*
" *how much ſorer puniſhment ſhall he be*
" *thought worthy, who hath trodden under*
" *foot the Son of God, and hath counted the*
" *blood of the covenant an unholy thing;*
" *and hath done deſpite to the Spirit of*
" *grace. That the God of all grace, who*
" *hath called us into his eternal glory by*
" *Chriſt Jeſus, would make us perfect,*
" *eſtabliſh, ſtrengthen, ſettle us—That we*
" *may continue in the faith, grounded and*
" *ſettled, and not be moved away from the*
" *hope of the Goſpel, being rooted and built*
" *up, and eſtabliſhed in the faith—Laying*
" *aſide every weight, and the ſin that does*
" *ſo eaſily beſet us: and running, with pa-*
" *tience, the race that is ſet before us—*

" Heb. x. 28. 1 Pet. v. 10. Col. i. 23.
" Ib. ii. 7. Heb. xii. 1, 2.

" *Holding faſt our profeſſion, without wa-*
" *vering; that we may abide in Chriſt,*
" *and his words may abide in us—Continu-*
" *ing in the things which we have learned*
" *—Being faithful unto the death, that he*
" *may beſtow upon us a crown of life.*

" *That the word of Chriſt may dwell in*
" *us richly, in all wiſdom—that we may*
" *grow in grace, and in the knowledge of*
" *our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt—*
" Being *filled with the fruits of righteouſ-*
" *neſs, which are by Jeſus Chriſt; unto*
" *the glory and praiſe of God*—That we
" may be ſtrong in the grace that is in
" Chriſt Jeſus.

" That *having fought a good fight, and*
" *finiſhed our courſe, and kept the faith, we*
" *may receive the crown of righteouſneſs,*
" *which, at the laſt day, the Lord, the*
" *righteous Judge, will beſtow upon all*
" *thoſe that love his appearing*—That he
" would *carry us, through faith, unto ſal-*
" *vation.*

" Heb. x. 23. John, xv. 7. 2 Tim. iii. 14.
" Rev. ii. 10. Col. iii. 16. 2 Pet. iii. 18.
" Phil. i. 11. 2 Tim. iv. 7, 8.

" And becauſe, when we have reckon-
" ed all the duties we can, we ſhall leave
" out many particulars, therefore, for the
" ſupply of thoſe which we cannot ſpe-
" cify, we may uſe ſome general form an-
" ſwerable to that exhortation of the
" Apoſtle—That whatſoever things are
" true, whatſoever things are honeſt,
" whatſoever things are juſt, *whatſoever*
" *things are pure, whatſoever things are*
" *lovely, whatſoever things are of good re-*
" *port, if there be any virtue, and if there*
" *be any praiſe, that we may think of and*
" *do theſe things.*

" Being *blameleſs and harmleſs, the ſons*
" *of God, without rebuke, in the midſt of*
" *a crooked and perverſe nation, among*
" *whom we may ſhine as lights in the*
" *world.*"

" Phil. iv. 8. Ib. ii. 15.

No. III.

ΩΔΑΙ ΠΝΕΥΜΑΤΙΚΑΙ. EPH. v. 19.

THE neglect of PSALMODY, in the congregations at large, has contributed very much to *damp* the ardour of devotion, and, conſequently, to cauſe an *indifference* to the Chriſtian religion. Leſs of inſtrumental, and more of vocal muſic, (in which all the people ſhould unite with heart and voice,) would conduce greatly to the revival of decayed piety. It would render our religious aſſemblies intereſting, where they are now cold, and merely formal.

Pſalmody, it is well known, is confined, in the greater part of country churches, to a few, and is become a matter of mere amuſement, both to the hearers and performers. To many, it is tedious and diſguſtful.

The whole congregation, women and children, as well as men, ſhould ſing ſimple tunes, ſuch as are eaſily learned, and, at the ſame time, deeply affect the heart, while they pleaſe the ear. The inſtrument ſhould not be ſo loud as to drown the voices. An organ, under the hands of an ambitious player, uſually overcomes the melody of the voice, and grates diſcord on the ear of piety.

When all join, to the beſt of their power, in ſinging well-compoſed hymns, all muſt be affected; and pſalmody will, like prayer, become a powerful means of grace. As it is now conducted, religion ſeems to have little or no concern with it. Some of the congregation ſit with indifference or impatience; others divert themſelves, as well as they can, with obſerving the grimaces of the ſingers; while one or two, *amateurs* and practitioners of muſic, lend an ear, as critics on the ſkill of the performers.

The ſoft and ſweet melody, in ſome of the places of religious worſhip frequented by

by various diſſenting congregations in London, is highly delightful to an uncorrupted ear, while it warms the heart with devotion, meliorates the diſpoſition, and leaves the hearer full of pious ſentiments to God, and charitable affections to man. As far as I am able to judge, pſalmody requires immediate reformation.

The Apoſtle ſays, "Let the word of "Chriſt dwell in you richly, in all wiſ-"dom, teaching and admoniſhing one "another in pſalms, and hymns, and "*ſpiritual* ſongs, ſinging with GRACE in "your hearts to the Lord *."

Is this addreſſed only to ten or twelve perſons in every congregation? Certainly it is addreſſed to all Chriſtians; and there is no doubt but that Chriſtianity would flouriſh more, if due attention were paid to pſalmody. Many who are ſeparated from the eſtabliſhed church, are influenced, in their ſeparation, by the ef-

* Col. iii. 16.

ficacious

ficacious method of deriving grace into their hearts, which they experience in their own aſſemblies, by the pleaſing, melting ſtrains of holy harmony.

No. IV.

A SHORT liſt of books, recommended to the choice of perſons who are not profeſſional ſtudents in divinity, but who, occupied in worldly buſineſs, read, in the intervals, for the ſake of improvement in piety and morality. It is not expected that ſuch perſons ſhould procure all which are here mentioned, but ſelect thoſe which they may beſt approve, or moſt conveniently obtain. Doubtleſs there are many more which might be recommended; but, conſidering for whom the books are deſigned, I am unwilling to enlarge the collection beyond reaſonable limits. I have arranged them alphabetically.

Barrow's Works.
Beveridge's Private Thoughts.
Baxter's Works.
Butler's Analogy.
Collyer's Sacred Interpreter.

Doddrige's

Doddridge's Riſe and Progreſs.
———— Family Expoſitor.
———— Lectures.
Derham's Phyſico-Theology.
Edwards's (John, of Cambridge) Works.
Earle on the Sacrament.
Gaſtrell's Inſtitutes.
——— Certainty and Neceſſity of Religion in general.
——— Certainty of the Chriſtian Revelation.
Gibſon's Family Devotions.
Gray's Key to the Old Teſtament.
Hammond's Practical Catechiſm.
Hale's Contemplations.
Horne's Commentary on the Pſalms.
Kettlewell's Works.
Kenn's Manual for Wincheſter Scholars.
Lowth's Directions for reading the Scriptures.
Lucas's Enquiry after Happineſs.
Nelſon's Works.
Norris's Works.
Owen's (Dr. John) Works.
Oſtervald's Corruptions of Chriſtianity.

Patrick's

Patrick's Works.
Pelling's Works.
Scott's Chriſtian Life.
Stanhope's Thomas a Kempis.
Smith's (John) Select Diſcourſes.
Spinckes's Devotions.
Taylor's (Biſhop) Works.
Trapp's Diſcourſes on the Goſpel.
Watts's Works.
Wilſon's (Biſhop) Works.
Waterland's Works—if any chooſe to enter into learned diſquiſitions on points of controverted doctrine.

No. V.

I DO not adviſe the true Chriſtian to enliſt himſelf under any of the celebrated SYSTEM-MAKERS. Such attachments only tend to make *parties* in religion, and to deſtroy charity. The church of England is ſaid to be *Calviniſtical* in its Articles, while the majority of its miniſters are *Arminians*.

Dr. Morley, afterwards Biſhop of Wincheſter, being aſked what the Arminians *held*, pleaſantly anſwered—that they *held*—all the beſt biſhoprics and deaneries in England.

The true follower of Jeſus Chriſt will ſeek no other appellation than that of *Chriſtian*. He will ſelect the true doctrine, wherever he can find it, but be bigotted to no NAME under Heaven.

"*Doctrina Chriſti*," ſays Eraſmus, "*quæ* "*prius neſciebat* ΑΟΓΟΜΑΧΙΑΝ *cœpit a phi-*

" *loſophiæ ſtudiis pendere: hic erat primus*
" *gradus eccleſiæ ad deteriora prolabentis.*"

On obſerving the various, and even contradictory tenets of the ſyſtem-writers and their followers, one is tempted to exclaim with the poet,

O Cecita de la terrene menti!
In qual profonda notte,
In qual foſca caligine d'errore
Son le noſtr' alme immerſe
Quando tu non le illuſtri, O SOMMO SOLE:
A che del ſaper voſtro
Inſuperbite, O MISERI MORTALI?
Queſta parte di noi, che 'ntende, e vede,
Non è noſtra virtu, ma vien dal CIELO.

PASTOR FIDO, Act v. Sc. 6.

THE END.

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